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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

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## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 16 May 2016

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 16 mai 2016

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 16 May 2016

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm pleased to welcome Sam Morra, chief officer at Condrain Group. He's also president of the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association. It's their lobby day at Queen's Park. Welcome.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would ask the members to help me welcome some special guests. They're musicians who are here straight from the beautiful island of St. Martin. The name of the band is 4DH Entertainment. They play hip hop and soca. We have with us Luciano Richards, Glenville Patrick, Daniel Christian, and their manager, Keith Sweeney, who is my constituent from the great riding of York South-Weston here in Toronto.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** It gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce, on their lobby day, Dan Corcoran, past president and Kingston representative, Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association; Mark Van Bree, Sarnia representative for the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association; Todd Arnott, secretary and Simcoe rep for the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association, and of Arnott Construction; and Tony DiPede, director-at-large, Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association board of directors. We welcome them all to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'd like to welcome my good friend and fellow New Democrat John O'Toole in the members' gallery here this morning.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** On behalf of my colleague the member from Guelph, Liz Sandals, I would like to welcome to the House Justine Richardson, the mother of our page captain William Deaton, and his sister Anna Sophia Deaton, this morning. Welcome to the gallery.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'd like to introduce several members of the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association who are joining us here today: Patrick McManus, Harry Bauman, Vince Bellissimo, Larry Taylor and Sam Dyson. Welcome, gentlemen, to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, I know that you'll more formally introduce John O'Toole yourself, but I did

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 16 mai 2016

want to introduce, as well, joining John today, good friend Mike Patrick.

Thank you very much for joining us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Very well done, member.

The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** In the Speaker's gallery today we're joined by one of the best high school teachers Oakville has ever seen: That's Beth Robertson. Her son Jeff and also Tim Robertson are with us today. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Today's page captain is Emma Vandermeer. Joining her is her mother, Kelly Tomkins, and her sister Faith Vandermeer. They're in the members' gallery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I am pleased to welcome to Queen's Park today Chris Steele and Angelina Palmisano. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I wish to welcome my cousin Todd Arnott of Arnott Construction, who's here with the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** As a proud dad, I'm very humbled and excited to introduce to the gallery this morning my daughter, Brooke Nicholls. She's in the members' gallery. Welcome, Brooke.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce my newest staff member, Cameron Wood, who has joined us today. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

Further introductions? Thank you.

I take my cue from the member from Renfrew. I appreciate his handling. In the members' west gallery is a former member, John O'Toole from Durham, in the 36th to the 40th Legislatures. Thank you and welcome to the House.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've witnessed many firsts; now we're heckling visitors.

It is now time for question period.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### ENERGY CONTRACTS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Thirty renewable energy companies have contributed over \$1.3 million to the Liberal Party. Each one of those companies has received a government FIT contract for wind turbines or a contract for solar power. Speaker, does the Minister of Energy think it's



acceptable to take over \$1.3 million from companies that receive multi-million dollars' worth of contracts from his ministry? Does he believe that's acceptable?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the member would know that the awarding of renewable contracts is the independent responsibility of the Independent Electricity System Operator. They make all the decisions. They also have a very, very strict regimen in terms of fairness and equity. They do have a fairness commissioner on each one of their contracts and they also do not let us know who the winners are. They might have 100 applications and they might award 10 or 12 contracts. We find out in the press release, just like everybody else in the public.

And, Mr. Speaker, that side—the opposition—holds \$10,000-a-seat fundraiser dinners. They listen to the stakeholders, as does the NDP.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Finds out in a press release? Half the time he's quoted in it.

Back to the minister: The minister may claim that it's an arm's-length process and he may claim that it's independent from political interference, but \$1.3 million from just 30 companies, all of which received government contracts? That just doesn't seem right. Can the minister honestly say that a donation to the Liberal Party has never been a factor in receiving a renewable energy contract?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** As I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, the process is absolutely, totally independent. It is conducted by the Independent Electricity System Operator. They have a fairness commissioner. The fairness commissioner has indicated quite clearly that they were objectively determined. There were no conflicts and no issues in any sense whatsoever on any of the contracts.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

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**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the minister: He may say in this House that donations have never influenced contracts, but let's just take a look at these wind contracts: 99.4% of all wind contracts were given to companies that made donations to the Liberal Party. Every company that has more than one turbine—you guessed it—donated to the Liberal Party. You want a wind contract in Ontario? Looks like you'd better open up your chequebook for a \$6,000 dinner with the Minister of Energy.

How does the minister defend this? How does he explain that almost every wind contract handed out went to a company that donated to the Liberal Party?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Before I—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm standing. Before I move on, the whistling stops. So whoever it is, stop whistling.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, in the last award of contracts there were 16 contracts awarded, and this is

what the fairness adviser said about this project, "We are satisfied that the evaluation of the proposals was conducted strictly in accordance with the process set out in the RFP. We detected no bias or favouritism towards or against any particular proponent."

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** It goes on to say, "Overall, we are satisfied that the RFP procurement process was conducted in a fair, open and transparent manner and that the IESO took all steps necessary to meet all procurement practices"—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds-Grenville.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —"related to fairness, openness and transparency."

Mr. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Right after I asked for quiet, it happens a second time from the member direct. It's not going to happen again.

Finish. Please wrap up.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I would take the fairness adviser's advice over a politically excited question from the legislator.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Good morning. My question is to the Minister of Energy this morning. The minister has continuously—and he's done it this morning—talked about an arm's-length process, an independent process in planning electricity projects in the province. However, 52 ministerial directives issued to the OPA and IESO since 2009 have been signed off on by the current minister or the former minister, the member from Scarborough Centre. Twenty-six of those directives dealt in whole or in part with the province's renewable energy strategy and affected companies who donated \$103 million to the Liberal Party, mentioned just moments ago by my colleague from the Ottawa Valley.

Does the minister actually believe it's really an arm's-length process if two ministers had to intervene personally 26 times?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Yes, there is a provision to provide directives to the various entities. I also receive requests from time to time from parties on the other side to look into particular issues that require addressing. It is not uncommon for us to look into them and, as a response to a request from the opposition, we do a directive and we help rectify a situation that needs rectification at the request of members from the other side.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** The minister has ignored the experts, and there has to be a reason for that.

"Because the ministerial directions were quite specific about what was to be done, both the ministry and the OPA directed their energies to implementing the minis-



ter's requested actions as quickly as possible." That was the Auditor General in 2011.

Another quote: "In our survey of former OPA board members, 83% of respondents felt that the ministry's directives had negative impacts on the overall quality (i.e., accountability and transparency) of electricity planning." That was a different Auditor General in 2015.

Why did the minister ignore the advice of experts at the OPA when it came to directives that affected renewable energy companies? What possible motivation could they have had to override their own experts?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear, in our government political donations do not buy policy decisions. Any suggestion otherwise is completely false.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we're committed to a rational, depoliticized process. The Independent Electricity System Operator is independent. When a directive is issued, it's issued with due consideration for the facts. As I indicated, there are circumstances when matters need to be resolved in a way that's satisfactory to the public. Often, that's in response to a request from members on the other side.

We do make interventions in the interest of the public, even when the requests are made by members from the other side.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** The Auditors General have said that the reason we're in such a mess in this province when it comes to our electricity sector is because of the meddling of these government ministers.

Back to the minister: 26 times this minister and a former minister intervened in the energy sector in ways that affected companies that donated \$1.3 million to the Liberals. Eighty-three per cent of OPA board members surveyed told the current AG that those directives had a negative impact on electricity planning.

As ratepayers watch their bills skyrocket in Ontario, what other conclusions can they draw? How else can the minister explain the 26 times that he and a former minister intervened in the electricity sector in ways that affected companies that donated \$1.3 million to the Liberal Party of Ontario?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I challenge the opposition to bring forward how many of the winners of these so-called contracts also made contributions to the Progressive Conservative Party. They would find out almost in every case.

We have a long-term energy plan. In that long-term energy plan, we consulted broadly with the public.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When I sit down, I'll wait for somebody to say something, other than the person giving the answer.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I would repeat again that the Independent Electricity System Operator makes those decisions independently. I will repeat again that on both sides of the House, they have \$9,000 or \$10,000 fundraisers for the same stakeholders who are contributing to the Liberal Party.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Why is this Liberal government cutting hospital services, closing beds and laying off front-line health care workers when major hospitals in Toronto and across Ontario are already overcrowded and filled beyond capacity?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Contrary to the assertions of the leader of the third party, we are investing more in health care. This year alone, there's \$1 billion more contained in our budget for the health care sector that the third party voted against. So where is that money going? An additional \$270 million for home and community care, \$75 million for community-based hospice and palliative care, \$85 million for community health centres, CHCs, and \$345 million for hospitals.

We are continuing to support the health care sector. We're getting better outcomes for patients. We're investing more in health care.

I do think that the third party should actually take a look at what we're doing and support those changes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, I see what this Liberal government is doing to the hospital sector. I see it very well.

According to the government's own information, many of Ontario's largest hospitals and critical regional health centres are running at above 100% capacity. Here in Toronto, the Hospital for Sick Children more often than not has no available beds. London Health Sciences: no available beds. Hospitals in Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie, Brantford, Peterborough, Hamilton and right across this province—the hospitals have no available beds.

How can the Acting Premier defend the Liberals' cuts to our hospitals when the government's own numbers prove that major hospitals are already overcrowded and forcing patients to wait for the care that they need?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The fundamental change that is under way in our health care system—and it's a system in transformation—is about building more capacity outside of our hospitals. We still have too many people in hospitals who do not need to be in hospital, who do not want to be in hospital, and that's why we're building the capacity in community—

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*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** So if the NDP's solution is to build more hospital beds when, actually, the demand is outside of hospitals—that's where we need to build capacity: outside. That's why we're investing in hospices, in



palliative care and in community care: because that's where people need the care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The OECD says that the safe limit on hospital occupancy in countries like the UK is 85%. But here in Ontario this Liberal government has forced many of our hospitals to operate at over 100% capacity. That means long wait times for patients in the ER because every bed in the hospital is already full. It makes it harder to control the spread of infection, and it puts pressure on cleaning staff. It means that patients end up being treated on stretchers or in hallways because there is no room left in the hospital.

How can this Acting Premier think that cutting hospital services, laying off nurses and health care workers and closing beds will do anything but make overcrowding worse in Ontario's hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's evident from this question that the third party does not understand the challenges in our health care system nor the solutions. If their solution is to build more hospital capacity—the most expensive kind of health care there is in the hospital—instead of investing in the community, well, we have a fundamental disagreement.

Our whole approach to health care is about providing the care that people need, and that is at home, in the community, in long-term care, in hospice and in palliative care—outside of hospitals. Why the third party wants to build capacity when, actually, the need is to build capacity in the community, I do not understand. I actually believe that if she spoke to her health critic she would understand that the capacity we need to build is outside of hospitals.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is back to the Acting Premier.

I don't know how a government would think that you don't need hospitals as part of your health care system. It makes no sense whatsoever.

It's not just that Liberal cuts mean hospitals are overcrowded. Records received by New Democrats reveal that, in fact—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Records received by New Democrats actually show—unbelievably show—that “the ministry does not have standards, guidelines, policies, or best practices with respect to hospital bed occupancy as it relates to hospital operations.” Why not?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, I'm tempted to remind the third party that their campaign position was to cut an additional 600,000 jobs—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —\$600 million. They even had a volunteer. The member from Kitchener–Waterloo actually volunteered—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carry on, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** So rather than cutting health care, we are expanding funding to health care, and we are building new hospitals.

The member from Cambridge has visited the Cambridge hospital that is under construction, providing important care in that community. We have 35 different hospital projects under way because we do believe hospitals are an essential part of the health care system, but they're not the only part of the health care system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This government doesn't have standards. They have no standards, guidelines or policies for hospital occupancy at all—it is unfathomable that that is the case in 2016—and no plans or policies to deal with overcrowding, that this government is forcing on hospitals.

How can the Liberal government run a health care system without any policy whatsoever to deal with overcrowding in our hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I just need to remind the leader of the third party that we are building hospitals across this province and they are being built to the highest possible standards. We also have the Excellent Care for All Act, which requires hospitals to publicly report on quality indicators that matter to patients, like infection rates. We are seeing improved quality because we have a focus on public reporting of quality indicators. For the leader of the third party to suggest that we have no standards in our hospitals, in our health care system, borderlines on the ridiculous.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What is ridiculous is that this government doesn't even know whether or not they have policies on overcrowding in hospitals and we're informing them for the first time that, in fact, they don't.

It is unbelievable. The minister talks about building new hospitals. Does she talk about the reduction in the number of beds overall that's happening in this province? Obviously, she's not. There's a silent crisis in the health care system here in Ontario. Liberals have made overcrowding in Ontario hospitals the norm and this Liberal government has literally no plan whatsoever to deal with it. Instead, their plan is more cuts, more layoffs and more bed closures. People deserve quality health care when and where they need it. Ontarians deserve a government that shares that priority.

Will the Acting Premier take a hard look at overcrowding in Ontario's hospitals, do the right thing and stop the cuts to our hospital system?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let's talk about what was in the budget that the NDP voted against when it comes to health care:



—more than \$345 million to all publicly funded hospitals, including a 1% base increase;

—\$175 million to provide patients with access to more services in new and redeveloped hospitals for targeted priority services such as organ and tissue transplants;

—\$160 million to improve access and wait times for hospital services, including additional procedures such as cataract, knee and hip replacements and knee arthroscopies;

—\$7.5 million for small, northern and rural hospitals in addition to the \$20-million Small and Rural Hospital Transformation Fund;

—\$6 million for mental health hospitals.

These are examples of investments we're making in the health care system that the NDP chose to vote against.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Experts continue to voice opposition to your decision to cut off IBI therapy to children over the age of five. On April 7, Autism Ontario put out a statement on the new autism strategy. They said:

"Families who have been on the waiting list for IBI services for many years are being doubly penalized ... by learning they will now not receive this service...."

"This devastating news has added to the financial burden borne by families of children and youth with ASD and adds to the stress they experience as caregivers."

The provincial advocate, Autism Ontario, families, therapists and many others have expressed concern over your announcement. How many more experts have to oppose your decision for you to allow children over the age of five to access IBI therapy?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm always pleased to get up in the House and speak about what we're doing to help children with ASD.

We are talking to the experts. We are talking with parent groups. We are speaking with experts in the field and the child advocate. In fact, I met with him again this morning. I know what his current thinking and advice is. I'm very appreciative of that.

As I've said before, as we move to the new program, the goal is to have more intensive services of a longer duration that are very individualized for all children with ASD. In the meantime, families whose children are on the wait-list can go off that wait-list and into immediate service. We're working closely with the service providers to make sure families are well supported.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** The only "individualized" that's happening is you're going from IBI wait-list to ABA wait-list.

Back to the minister: CityNews aired a story last week about Dr. Ian Dawe and a parent on Twitter who asked him if their child would benefit from IBI therapy even though he was six years old. Dr. Dawe stated there is "no

evidence that your child might not benefit from it." Minister, Dr. Dawe is your expert. He chaired the panel that wrote the report that you say your decision is based upon. Dr. Dawe goes on to say, "What the government has funded was not what we recommended."

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Listen to Dr. Dawe. Listen to Autism Ontario. Listen to the thousands of families being abandoned by your government and allow children over the age of five access to IBI.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Just to be clear, I don't believe Dr. Dawe is part of the current clinical expert panel. Having said that, I recognize and respect the work he has done with this government in the past and, quite frankly, I find his comments unfortunate and regrettable. I'll tell you why I say that: because our goal is to get children who have autism faster and more appropriate services, regardless of the age, and to make sure that we transition to the new program in a way that supports those kids.

Of course, our advice is based on the clinical expert committee, and that report is available on our website, but we're still meeting with the clinical expert committee. We're meeting with parents. We're meeting with the alliance of parents for autism and they're going to help us with the implementation to make sure families are well supported going forward.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Acting Premier. The Liberal government has decided that Ontarians concerned about the government's changes to autism therapy will face serious limitations on their ability to purchase non-partisan advertisements, but the government can spend as much as it wants before an election campaign and during an election campaign. Why is the government putting limits on what concerned parents can say while giving the Liberal government free rein to advertise as much as it wants?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think that there is a consensus in this province that we need to make changes to political fundraising. I think there is a strong consensus that we should actually make some important changes, including banning corporate donations, union donations and so on.

We are moving forward with changes. We invited all parties to participate before that legislation was even introduced, and it's highly unfortunate that the third party has chosen not to attend meetings. I was very pleased, though, to hear last week that they have come forward with some ideas on what the changes are that we need to make. We are really hoping we're going to be able to move forward together to make the changes that the people of this province expect us to make.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Again to the Acting Premier: Last year, your government created a new loophole in the Government Advertising Act. Ontario's non-partisan Auditor General said that this loophole would "gut the province's landmark law prohibiting partisan government advertising." The AG continued, "These ... changes would allow the government to spend public dollars on partisan advertising with little of the current independent oversight."

Why is the Liberal government putting strict limits on non-partisan public interest groups like the Ontario Autism Coalition and no limits on partisan government ads?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, Ontario is the first and only jurisdiction in Canada, and one of the very few in the world, to enact legislation that bans government-paid partisan advertising in newspapers, in magazines, on radio and on television. We passed this historic legislation because we are against government using taxpayer dollars for partisan advertising.

If you remember back to 2003, prior to the last election, you will remember examples of partisan advertising paid for by taxpayers, when the then Premier of the day appeared in advertisements paid by the taxpayers. We banned that. We remain committed to banning that. You will find that Ontario remains one of the very few jurisdictions in the world to ban partisan advertising.

#### ROAD SAFETY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Minister, we hear regularly about your expressed concern about road safety, as well as pedestrian safety, as one of the government's top priorities. In the most recent provincial statistics, there were 100 pedestrian fatalities making up 19% of all motor vehicle fatalities in Ontario. This is a far cry from the almost 200 reported in the late 1980s. However, more needs to be done on this particular file.

Recently, I received an email from Mathew, a grade 10 student from Dr. Norman Bethune, expressing concern about distracted drivers as well as pedestrian safety.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he please inform the House, as well as my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, what our government is doing to help improve pedestrian safety?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to begin by thanking the member from Scarborough-Agincourt for her question on this very important topic. Of course, it is a very timely question as today marks the first day of pedestrian safety week. I agree that there is always more we can do to help keep our pedestrians safe here in the province of Ontario. I want to assure the member that this is an issue that the Ministry of Transportation takes very seriously.

With the passing of Bill 31 last June, drivers and cyclists—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay. If he does it again, he'll get a second one.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** —are now required to yield the entire roadway at pedestrian crossovers and school crossings. And since 2003, we've also doubled the maximum fines—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Timmins-James Bay, second time.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** —for drivers running a red light, and we've introduced demerit points for those drivers committing crossover violations.

We also know that our municipal partners have an important role to play in pedestrian safety, which is why we continue to assist them in enacting traffic-calming measures, better-marked crosswalks and enhanced pedestrian signals.

We know that our work is not done, which is why we'll continue to work with all of our safety partners to keep pedestrians safe.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Thank you to the minister for this response. I know there's no easy solution to change drivers' behaviour, but those living in my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt will be happy to know that we are continuing to work very hard on this file to keep all Ontarians safe.

Distracted driving can result in a variety of road accidents, as well as death. I know that impaired driving can also be a leading cause of accidents in my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt. With the May long weekend around the corner, I know that the OPP will be on high alert for any impaired drivers.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he please provide more information on what the government is doing to help prevent drunk driving on our roads?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Again, that's a great question from the member from Scarborough-Agincourt.

We absolutely understand as a government that impaired driving continues to occur on Ontario's roads. Again, we know there is certainly always more that can be done.

Since 2003, our government has introduced a number of new laws and penalties to help fight impaired driving. These include an immediate 90-day driver's licence suspension and seven-day vehicle impoundments for drivers who, as they say, blow over the legal limit; strengthening sanctions against drivers caught within the warning range; and mandatory remedial education and ignition interlock for convicted impaired drivers.

Recent statistics show that our initiatives are working to curb drinking and driving. Ontario had the lowest impaired driving offence rate in Canada in 2014, which is 47% lower than the national average.

But until no mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and friends are lost to impaired driving, we will continue fighting to make sure that our roads are as safe as they can be.

#### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question today is for the Acting Premier. Earlier this month, I wrote to



Ontario's auto czar, Ray Tanguay, regarding Ontario's climate change action plan. More details of this plan have emerged today, including dramatic targets for "a zero-emission or hybrid electric vehicle in every multicar household driveway within eight years."

It seems this government refuses to allow business in the free market to drive innovation and demand. We've already seen manufacturers pack up and leave the province, putting thousands of people out of work. Now the Premier is telling the few remaining manufacturers in this industry that it's her way or the highway.

Speaker, this plan represents a crushing shift for Ontario's \$16-billion auto industry and the over 100,000 auto workers across Ontario. How many jobs will be lost across Ontario if this Liberal plan is implemented?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I know the minister will want to speak to the supplementary, but I do need to say that this government is committed to taking strong action when it comes to climate change. We feel the responsibility to the planet, to our kids, to our grandkids. We are prepared to take that action.

The third party, although it pretends that it supports—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The opposition says that it supports action on climate change. The leader even said that he had the support of the entire caucus. But what we're seeing is that there is support for the words but there is not support for any actions. So we are prepared to take actions.

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This is not easy change, but this is vitally important change, Speaker. I'm proud of the direction we're going. We made a commitment. We're implementing that commitment.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds—Grenville, second time.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do wish that the opposition would actually be prepared to support the action and not just say the words.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Back to the Acting Premier: The Minister of the Environment has already indicated his desire to close down Ontario's nuclear industry, and today we have confirmed that his plans will threaten Ontario's vital auto sector as well.

Speaker, you would know that Ontario has lost General Motors in Windsor and the Ford plant near St. Thomas, and the GM plant in Oshawa could easily be the next to go, taking with it \$5.7 billion in annual GDP and over 33,000 well-paying jobs. Clearly, the Minister of the Environment's plan is one that could tip the scale and drive auto manufacturers and thousands of good, paying jobs out of Ontario.

Is the Liberal government committed to working with and building up Ontario's auto sector, or does the Acting Premier agree with the Minister of the Environment, who

said that Ontario's auto industry is "missing courageous leadership"?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, the opposition has zero credibility on this issue, absolutely zero—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings, second time.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, if you say something else, you'll be gone.

Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** When the auto sector was facing huge challenges, the opposition party said, "Let them fail. Let them close." We stepped in. We stepped in with the support of the federal government—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll go there. The member from Leeds—Grenville is warned.

The member from Nipissing, come to order, and the member from Renfrew, come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, they wanted to abandon the sector. They wanted those jobs to be lost. Five hundred thousand Ontario families depend on the auto sector for their livelihood. It's a vitally important sector for us. We will continue to support the auto sector, even though the opposition party says that we should abandon that sector.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Last week, the Minister of Energy told this House that Ontario earns a net profit from the surplus electricity that we export to other jurisdictions. He said the IESO will confirm that last year we made a net profit of \$350 million. Speaker, this would be an astonishing reversal of what the Auditor General described in her most recent report. She said that between 2009 and 2014 Ontario was paid \$3.1 billion less for its electricity exports than what we paid to generate that power. That is a net loss of \$3.1 billion. Why is the minister still using the term "net profit" to describe billions of dollars in net losses?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The import/export of electricity is the responsibility, in terms of governance, of the Independent Electricity System Operator, the IESO. They trade in electricity imports and exports on a daily basis, as do all of our surrounding jurisdictions: New York state, Quebec, Manitoba etc. We work amongst ourselves.

You often hear about selling or giving electricity away, Mr. Speaker. That does occasionally happen. But we never hear of the times that we sell it to Quebec, for example, and earn \$15 million or \$20 million in three or four days, when they're short of electricity in the wintertime

They will indicate that there was a net benefit last year of \$320 million on the import and export of electricity, and that supports the quote that I often use from the third-party former Minister of Energy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, in the past the minister has had to stand in this House and withdraw the claim that Ontario was making a profit on these sales. He has had to withdraw.

According to the IESO, last year Ontario exported nearly 22,600 gigawatt hours of electricity. According to the minister himself, the average cost of producing that electricity was \$83 per megawatt hour, so the total cost to generate that exported electricity can be roughly estimated at about \$1.9 billion.

Will the minister either confirm that Ontario exported electricity last year at a price that was \$350 million above the amount it cost ratepayers to pay for it, or will he withdraw his statement that Ontarians earn a net profit on electricity exports and stop misleading the House?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** No. I told the truth.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I advise the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** No.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If the member does not withdraw, I will name him. The member from Toronto–Danforth is named.

*Mr. Tabuns was escorted from the chamber.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** There is a lot of confusion on the import and export of electricity, Mr. Speaker. However, I want to refer—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** However, I want to refer to an expert on the subject: “Any power we sell to the US, to Quebec, to Manitoba, or power they sell us, is surplus power.”

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, second time.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** “It’s opportunity power. It’s pure profit, in terms that it’s power that otherwise would go to waste or not be generated.”

That’s a quote from the former Minister of Energy—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, second time. The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe–Grey, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General, come to order.

Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** As I said, Mr. Speaker, I think the member—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings is warned.

You’re finished.

New question.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. It’s encouraging that we finally have recognition by one-time nay-sayers that climate change is real and that we need to work together to reduce carbon emissions if we’re going to mitigate the serious effects of climate change.

We know that early adoption of carbon pricing is going to be good for Ontario, both from an economic and an environmental standpoint, and it’s going to drive down costs and give businesses a competitive edge.

Ontario has committed to a 15% reduction in GHGs by 2020, 37% by 2030 and 80% by 2050.

Speaker, could the minister please give this House more details on the proposed timeline for early adoption of carbon pricing in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank my colleague from Kitchener Centre for an excellent question.

Presuming, or hoping, that this legislation will soon pass—Bill 172, and then subsequently, the government would pass the regulations associated with that—we would probably see our first carbon auction early in 2017, before the spring. That would set up the first trading market. Later, within a year or so, we would start to negotiate the linking with Quebec and California, to open up what will be one of the largest and most stable carbon markets, as well.

We have a lot of work to do. We have very close collaboration with the auto sector, with mining and with forestry, because this is a very, very significant investment—a pretty much unprecedented one in all of those industries.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I’d like to thank the minister for his response and for being a champion of the environment here in Ontario. Taking leadership on this issue is no doubt challenging, and the minister is never one to shy away from a good challenge.

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The early adoption of carbon pricing by passing Bill 172 is of the utmost importance. We know that, through the committee process, this government worked closely with the NDP in order to strengthen the legislation. We listened to stakeholders during public presentations in committee and made some very thoughtful changes to the legislation. In particular, the updates focused on making the bill more accountable and more transparent.

Could the minister please offer this House more details on the changes that were made at the committee stage to improve the legislation?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I do agree, and I want to thank my critic in the New Democratic Party.



There are a couple of things that came forward out of that process. One of them was a low-income lens on all of our investments and the reporting with that. I want to thank the third party; we worked very closely on that.

Senator Kevin de León, the senator pro tem in the California senate, has developed a model program that we think is quite exciting.

We also worked with the third party to go to annual rather than five-year reporting, to align with the annual investment fund.

We took what we heard from stakeholders through that process at committee and looked at several helpful suggestions that came through. Many of those changes relate to reporting, accountability and fairness. This cap-and-trade system here in Ontario will probably have the highest standard of reporting and verification—certainly in North America, if not the world.

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the energy minister. Natural gas provides 76% of home heating across this province, including in the city of Ottawa. With a wave of Glen Murray's magic wand, this government wants that to go away.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As the member does know, we refer to someone either by their riding or by their title. Make sure it happens, please.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —he wants that to go away. But that magic will come at a price. We know that the annual cost is at least \$3,000 to the average homeowner. I ask you, how is the single mother on FRO, family responsibility, going to be able to get that money? Where is the senior citizen on a fixed income going to find that money? Where is the young couple pursuing their dream of buying their first home going to find that money? Who is going to pay for that extra \$3,000 a year when the government kicks people off of natural gas?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I think it's a very fair question for the member to ask.

As members would know, there's been an extensive series of consultations with stakeholders, probably the most intensive consultation that we've seen in the energy sector, with respect to this issue.

But let's look at some of the facts that indicate where we're going. Our 2016 budget provides that cap-and-trade will take \$24 per year off of residential bills and, on average, will not cause any increase, notwithstanding that particular policy. Throughout the process, we've also had tax credits that have benefited residents of Ontario to the extent of \$400 million every year. We are going to have cap-and-trade revenue that will be allocated to protect—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Is there anyone in this House or in this province that believes this Liberal government will do anything but increase the price of hydro in the province of Ontario? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker, and I

think if the minister wanted to look at the facts, he'd look at the last 13 years this government has been in office and how prices have skyrocketed.

I'm not sure why the minister wouldn't clarify who is paying before this—because Adrian Morrow was quite clear in the Globe and Mail that the plan will cover the increased costs of electricity.

Is the government writing a cheque to every single natural-gas-heated household for \$3,000 a year annually? Where will the money come from? Will it end up on everyone else's hydro bill?

There is no doubt that this plan will not only cost the people who are being kicked off natural gas more money, it will also cost everyone else on their hydro bill.

I ask the minister one more time: How much more will it cost everyone and where—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Energy.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** When this government said it was going to go off dirty, cheap coal—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont, come to order.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —they said it could never be done. We actually accomplished it, and at this time we have the cleanest electricity system in North America, if not in the world.

Similarly, going forward with cap-and-trade, we will create the mitigation measures that will keep—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are a couple of members who have already been warned. The next step is you're named.

One wrap-up sentence, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Rates went up in Ontario by 2.5% about a month or two ago. Rates at BC Hydro went up by 4%; Saskatchewan—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Last week, Dr. Ian Dawe, the chair of the government's own expert panel on autism, came out against the government's plan. He said, "What the government has funded was not what we recommended."

Speaker, you can't claim to be making decisions based on science if you're ignoring the experts behind the science. This is about vulnerable kids who deserve access to the life-changing therapy that they were promised. It's time to put kids first. This Liberal government needs to stop thinking that they know more than the clinicians and speak to the experts who are sounding the alarm. What is



the point of appointing an expert panel if you're just going to arrogantly ignore them?

Does the Deputy Premier disagree with the chair of her government's own expert panel on autism?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's important for me to say yet again that Dr. Dawe is not the current chair of the clinical expert committee. He was. He was.

Also, it's very clear, if anyone is looking at where we are bringing this program forward, that we have based our designs and our goals for the program on that clinical committee that, yes, he did chair before. We're continuing to work with the current committee and we're continuing to listen to experts.

I would also say that the member of the third party was quite supportive of some of these principles that the committee spoke about. She said late last year that for children waiting for age-sensitive treatment, which helps autistic children cope better with the world around them, the lists are long, and that studies after studies show more effective treatments happen when they're delivered before the age of seven. So she supports that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Okay. Speaker, this doesn't even make sense. He was the chair of the committee who put forward the panel that you made your decision on. Now he doesn't agree with you, so you throw him under the bus. It doesn't make sense.

The chair of the government's panel is only one of a growing number of voices of clinicians and experts coming forward. Minutes from the October 2015 meeting of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education state that 93% of those receiving IBI are five and older—93%, Speaker. That means that the government knew back in 2015 that this plan would only leave 7% of children in need in life-changing therapy. I guess now we know where the five-year age cap came from. It's obvious that this decision was all about money.

This government is balancing the budget on the backs of kids with autism. Will the Deputy Premier admit that this decision was based on saving money and reverse—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Well, Speaker, I've said it before and I'll say it again: I'm very concerned about the tactics of the opposition. It is not a partisan issue. We're investing 333 million new dollars and creating 16,000 new spaces.

I heard what Dr. Dawe said. I'm puzzled by what he said. The reality is that the work that has been developed on this program is based in large part on what the clinical expert committee said. I've met with the current members of the clinical expert committee. They are going to play an ongoing role—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain, second time.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** —along with other stakeholders as we work to implement this program to get the right kind of programs in place—

*Interjection.*

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**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain is warned.

Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Speaker, I think we all want the same thing: We want the best support and outcomes for children with ASD, and we're working on that. We're doing that through this new program, and we're supporting those children who are languishing on a wait-list by putting them into immediate service. We'll continue to make sure they get the information and the communication that they deserve.

## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Minister, as you know, our government is committed to improving how we deliver social assistance as part of our efforts to support vulnerable Ontarians, so that they can participate in our economy and in our communities.

This is why our government is introducing a new reloadable payment card. Although we encourage all of our clients to use direct bank deposit to ensure that they receive their payments in a timely manner that is secure, efficient and convenient, many of them cannot open or maintain a bank account. These are some of the most vulnerable people in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please explain how a reloadable payment card will make life easier for Ontarians on social assistance?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the member for the question.

The reloadable payment card is one way we are moving social assistance into the 21st century and providing better service to our most vulnerable clients.

The card works like a debit card, but does not require a bank account. The new card will make it unnecessary for clients to rely on expensive cheque-cashing services or put themselves at personal risk by carrying large amounts of cash. It will offer four free ATM withdrawals per month and unlimited in-store or online payments and purchases, and it will also increase security with PIN and chip technology. Clients will also be receiving support from their caseworkers in learning how to use the card.

We've begun the test phase of reloadable payment cards with clients who volunteer. We'll get their feedback before we roll out the card more broadly this summer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to the minister for her answer.



This government clearly recognizes the importance of improving services to clients as part of its wide-reaching improvements to social assistance in Ontario. Having safer and less expensive access to benefits is important for the most vulnerable among us.

I understand that local ODSP offices have been provided with information to help them reach out to community partners, including the police and advocacy groups, to raise awareness about the new card. It is crucial that these service delivery improvements also make efforts to enhance the social inclusion of clients, and it is great to hear that this new reloadable payment card will contribute to this goal.

Will the minister elaborate on how the reloadable payment card will make it safer and easier for people to receive and use their social assistance benefits?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Moving to a reloadable payment card means that clients have more control over their money, with the ability to make point-of-sale purchases and online payments and purchases. The card will not identify the cardholder as a social assistance client or a recipient of government services.

In fact, we have already received positive feedback from the front lines. An ODSP manager from Windsor said, "The reloadable payment card helped one of our ODSP clients ... by ensuring that he did not have to carry cash, which would have made him vulnerable to theft, and made it easy for him to purchase the things that he needed. The cards are also easy to issue. It's nice to have a simplified process that also helps clients."

We're committed to making life easier for our clients, and the reloadable payment card is a prime example of that.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Speaker, there seems to be no limit to how much pain this government will inflict on homeowners and small business in order to get their way. It's been confirmed in a leaked cabinet document that Ontario is going to eliminate natural gas, the energy source that provides 76% of the province's heating. This is the energy source that all analysts have said is the most efficient way to provide heat to homes and businesses. You're going to force them to heat electrically in a province with the highest electricity prices on the continent.

We know that the environment minister doesn't care what it costs people to live, but we do. This government needs to adopt a realistic plan to cut emissions without crippling our economy or hurting families and small businesses. Will you commit to that today?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the opposition says, we are not banning natural gas at all—period. Number two: We have a very robust—the Minister of Energy could tell you about this—rural extension program for natural gas, which we're very sup-

portive of. It's a very critical part of our energy and climate change strategies, Mr. Speaker. We will, as other jurisdictions have, reduce emissions from buildings, but that does not come at the expense—actually, it's the opposition that doesn't want to support the cap-and-trade revenues going into the auto sector, going to families to help lower their costs, building the capacity of our electricity system. They have a system that actually would leave Ontarians stranded. We believe in investing in Ontario businesses and in natural gas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Minister of the Environment changes every day. I know his own Minister of Energy would say this guy's all over the map.

Speaker, the fossil fuel elimination plan will cost 42,500 jobs in the oil and natural gas sectors, and will drive up the cost of doing business for everyone in the province of Ontario. They want to drive people to heat their homes electrically and drive electric cars. The question remains, where will they get the electricity? If you're cutting off natural gas to homes, presumably you're going to shut down natural-gas-fired power plants. And with the environment minister saying we're going to be shutting down nuclear plants within 10 to 20 years, where will you get the electricity?

Is it not time to rethink this strategy? Stop pretending you can do something so that you can appear to be the green champions, and begin to think of ways to reduce our carbon footprint that will not destroy families and—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The opposition famously said that they wouldn't read the budget before they made up their mind. Maybe that's why they have a problem, Mr. Speaker. Because let me read from the budget, page 63: "The province is also developing programs to help communities partner with utilities to extend access to natural gas supplies. Ontario will introduce a loan program to support access to natural gas in 2016." And it goes on.

The budget and the climate action plan are compatible. This government has a very strong plan to invest in energy in this province and in reducing climate change. These are complementary, non-contradictory initiatives. Maybe next time they'll read the budget and then decide how they're going to vote for it. They won't be so confused, Mr. Speaker.

## ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have two order paper questions on the docket, numbers 565 and 566, that I believe are now late. They're over five months late. I would like the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to respond to these two questions.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I am going to defer to the deputy House leader. They are overdue and I'm going to ask him to advise the House.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** To answer your question, Mr. Speaker, I will look into the matter and ensure that it is resolved to the satisfaction of members of the House.

#### MEMBER'S ANNIVERSARY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland–Quinte West on a point of order.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** On a point of order, I'd like to wish my wife a happy 46th wedding anniversary today.

#### ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound on a point of order.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I have two order paper questions dated November 30 that are overdue, numbers 541 and 543, for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy House leader, I am told the questions are overdue. I'll defer to you to give us a response, please.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, to anyone who rises in the House with this particular matter, I'll be happy to look into it as deputy House leader and resolve it to the satisfaction of members of the assembly.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Finance on a point of order.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I'd just like to welcome to this House two entrepreneurs and business people from my riding: Bob and Heather Kerby from Starline Production are here today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings on a point of order.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to correct my record from earlier this morning. During lead questions, I inadvertently said the wrong number for the amount that's been raised by the Liberal Party when referring to renewable energy projects. The number is actually \$1.3 million.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Beaches–East York on a point of order.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** On behalf of the Minister of Education and the MPP for Guelph, I want to welcome Justine Richardson, mother, and Anna Sophia Deaton, sister, of our page captain today, William Deaton.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** From the Ontario Sewer and Water-main Construction Association: Patrick McManus, Harry Bauman, Vince Bellissimo, Larry Taylor and Sam Dyson. Welcome to Queen's Park. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Speaker, I am honoured to represent the people of Perth–Wellington. I rely on their feedback to share their concerns and stories in this Legislature. I am pleased that so many took the time to respond to my last survey.

Top of mind for my constituents are skyrocketing energy costs. I heard heartbreaking stories about the impact that high bills are having. One couple had to sell their home, as they couldn't afford their bills.

When asked what this government's top priority should be, two answers dominated the responses: reduce energy costs and reduce government spending.

Sadly, this government has done neither during its 13 years in power. When it comes to the government's plans to introduce the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, a staggering 77% of my constituents who responded are opposed. Nearly everyone who responded does not support the government's changes to the estate administration tax. In fact, 88% of respondents told me that they are very concerned with the amount of debt this government has racked up.

Over 90% of respondents have not received the 15% reduction in auto insurance rate that this government promised them.

Speaker, as you may recall, I passed a resolution in this House calling for fair and transparent infrastructure investments, free from political considerations. Some 98% of respondents agreed. The evidence is clear: Politics must stay out of infrastructure funding.

I appreciate this advice and will continue to stand up for the issues that matter to us in Perth–Wellington.

##### PARENTAL RIGHTS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Imagine this scenario: You go to the hospital expecting your first child and your wife goes into distress on the delivery table. At one point, you even think you might lose her. She seems close to death. Then, to compound your fear and the situation, you recognize and realize that you have absolutely no claim over the



baby if your wife dies, even though you are legally married in the province of Ontario.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the case for LGBTQ folk. That is the case for some 21 parents who are now engaged in a charter challenge, a lawsuit against this very government. That is the case unless this government passes Cy and Ruby's Act, which would equalize the status of heterosexual couples and those who are LGBTQ, who do not have the same rights of parenthood and who may have to adopt their own children.

I ask, why are we in this predicament? The bill, Cy and Ruby's Act, passed second reading. We're waiting on the government to act but they're not. And now they're spending taxpayers' dollars fighting the very parents who want equality. Please say it ain't so, Mr. Speaker. Please, to the government side, if you have any impact on your cabinet members, please speak to them. These are your constituents.

### ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Speaker, I rise today in honour of Yom Ha'atzmaut, the national day of Israel, celebrated last week.

The national day of Israel commemorates the Israeli declaration of independence, signed in 1948, which marked the official foundation of the modern state of Israel. The establishment of the modern state of Israel was a profound moment for the Jewish people. It marked a creation for a homeland for a people who have, throughout history, experienced exile and persecution. Sixty-eight years have passed since independence was achieved, and in this time Israel has grown into a strong and prosperous nation and a leader in the international community.

Here in Ontario, Israeli Independence Day is an important day to take pride in our own vibrant Jewish communities and the invaluable contributions made by members of Ontario's Jewish community to the social, economic and cultural life of our province.

Here at Queen's Park, we celebrated those contributions by joining together on the lawn to raise the flag of Israel.

While in Israel this week, our Premier is leading an important trade mission, meeting with Israeli leaders and innovators to further strengthen the already strong relationship between Ontario and Israel.

To all celebrating in Ontario and abroad, congratulations on Israel's 68th Independence Day, and best wishes for the next 68 years of achievement.

### YOUNG PROFESSIONALS WEEK

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to recognize the first Young Professionals Week in Ontario.

Young Professionals Week focuses on what it means to be a young professional in this province and to educate our communities and employers on the importance of retaining and supporting young professionals.

The Haliburton Highlands Young Professionals Network is a platform to engage people under 40 in meaningful conversation and action on the economic, social and cultural well-being of our community. To celebrate the week-long initiative, the Haliburton Highlands Youth Professionals Network committee will be sharing what is important to young professionals and how they impact the future of this province. The local organization recognizes that, even in rural Ontario, our knowledge economy is expanding and the cultural fabric of our communities is diversifying, so we should create and identify opportunities for professionals and community development with the Haliburton Highlands workforce.

We need to develop our youth strength, build upon existing skills, and address the skills mismatch in our community and in our province. The skills gap is costing our economy \$24.3 billion a year and \$3.7 billion in forgone tax revenue. We need to train and educate our youth for the jobs of today and anticipate the needs of tomorrow. The success of our children will ultimately drive the success of our province and our country. So let's share great stories this week with #YPweekON.

### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I rise on behalf of my London-Fanshawe constituents to discuss this government's silent crisis: health care. No matter who you are, where you live or how much money you make, your health and the health of your family is your first priority. But the constant decline of our health care system is hurting families and communities across Ontario.

This is especially true in my hometown of London, where the effects of this government's ongoing cuts to health care are obvious. Today's revelations from my party's freedom-of-information request show that the University site of London Health Sciences has been running at over 100% capacity for all 10 quarters of the reporting period—at least two and a half years.

At the same time, as many Ontario hospitals are filled beyond capacity, the Wynne Liberals keep cutting hospital services, laying off front-line care workers and closing beds. It's disappointing that this Liberal government refuses to listen and even admit that hospital overcrowding is a problem in Ontario. We all know that the health care of our families is our most important priority, yet this government has spent years refusing to meet the health care needs of Ontarians. Now is the time to stop this crisis in health care before it gets worse.

### ASTRONUTS KIDS' SPACE CLUB

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to highlight a great organization from my riding of Newmarket-Aurora. This past weekend, AstroNuts Kids' Space Club hosted its fifth annual "What's Up in Space" camp at the David Dunlap Observatory. The day included a variety of science and space-related activities, including a live chat with astronaut Tim Peake from his post at the International Space Station.



AstroNuts Kids' Space Club, a not-for-profit group, was founded by Ray Bielecki and his 13-year-old son Brett in response to Brett's desire to learn more about space exploration. During their five years of operation, AstroNuts Kids' Space Club has become very active throughout our community by educating elementary children in space and science. Organizations like AstroNuts inspire children to learn. AstroNuts shows children the connection between what they are doing in the classroom and how it applies in the real world.

AstroNuts space camp also reflects the strong aerospace heritage of my riding of Newmarket–Aurora. For years, residents of Newmarket–Aurora have worked in aerospace at all levels for companies like de Havilland, A.V. Roe and, now, Bombardier. From the Alouette 1 satellite through the STOL aircraft of de Havilland and now Bombardier's Dash-8 series aircraft and Challenger corporate jets, Newmarket–Aurora residents have provided the expertise to put Canada at the forefront of the aerospace industry. I have no doubts that AstroNuts space camp will build the next generation of aerospace workers.

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#### TAMIL GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** We take time this week to remember the loss of many innocent victims who perished during the armed conflict in Sri Lanka. This is the seventh year since the Battle of Mullivaikal in May 2009, when civilians were shelled by government forces within a no-fire zone as they attempted to flee. According to the UN Secretary-General's panel of experts on accountability in Sri Lanka, it was estimated that approximately 40,000 civilians may have been killed in the final months of the conflict as a result of this indiscriminate shelling. Regrettably, there's been insufficient progress in seeking justice for victims of genocide.

This month, Speaker, members of the Tamil community around the globe gathered to participate in memorial services to remember their loved ones. I stand with the members of the Tamil community here in Ontario and those who support efforts for peace and reconciliation. They may be gone but they will not be forgotten.

#### CARDIAC CARE

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** On Friday, I was proud to join the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care in my riding of Barrie to announce capital funding for the advanced cardiac care centre at the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre, where the minister was impressed by the overwhelming volunteer spirit and community support. These people have raised millions of dollars and donated thousands of volunteer hours.

When it comes to the heart, time is muscle. For every minute that a heart attack patient goes without treatment, heart muscle is dying. Currently, the north Simcoe-

Muskoka region doesn't provide advanced cardiac care services within its boundaries and, as a result, most patients cannot get to the nearest cardiac care centre in Newmarket within 90 minutes. However, this will soon change. Construction of this 14,000-square-foot facility will begin this fall, and by this time next year, RVH will be able to provide this life-saving treatment to people who live north of Barrie in places such as Midland, Penetanguishene, Collingwood and Bracebridge.

The centre will house catheterization labs where cardiac specialists can provide diagnostics and interventions such as angiograms and angioplasties to give heart patients access to faster treatment, a shorter hospital stay and less travel time.

This investment reconfirms our government's commitment to top-quality health care, not only in our region but right across the province. I'm proud that our government is improving health care and putting patients first.

#### WILDLIFE PROTECTION

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Today I rise to speak about an important investment that has been made in my riding of Brampton–Springdale. Residents, environmentalists and community groups got together this weekend for an announcement important to Brampton residents, not only today but for generations to come. The Living City Foundation was the recipient of funding from the provincial Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund for their work across the GTA and projects that encourage and implement a better environment for us and our future generations, including this project to protect habitat and species.

I was joined by the Living City Foundation at Heart Lake Conservation Area to make the announcement about their project and the funding support that they will receive. The announcement was made at the aboriginal Medicine Wheel Garden site in the park, where some of the project will be installed.

Each year, the fund provides financial support for grassroots efforts to protect the health of our Great Lakes watershed. I am pleased that this year there are two projects in my riding of Brampton–Springdale that will be receiving funding.

This project is a wonderful example of how residents, city scientists and community groups, along with the province of Ontario and the TRCA, have worked together to achieve a common goal, which is to protect local wildlife populations. This year, two organizations have received funding for environmental projects, including the Living City Foundation and Evergreen.

This project by the Living City Foundation is an important one, and I'm proud of all the work being done in Brampton–Springdale with investments made by the provincial Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund. It is not only important for everybody, including residents, to work together to achieve a common goal for our future generations in this city, but also to help protect local wildlife populations.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS AMENDMENT ACT (CHILD CARE WAITING LISTS), 2016 LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA GARDE D'ENFANTS ET LA PETITE ENFANCE (LISTES D'ATTENTE POUR LES SERVICES DE GARDE)

Mr. Potts moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 199, An Act to amend the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 with respect to waiting lists for child care / Projet de loi 199, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2014 sur la garde d'enfants et la petite enfance à l'égard des listes d'attente pour les services de garde.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** The Child Care and Early Years Amendment Act, if passed, would amend the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, with respect to waiting lists for child care. A new section, 14.1, would prohibit licensees and child care providers from establishing or maintaining child care waiting lists other than in accordance with that section. Licensees and child care providers are also prohibited from charging or accepting fees or deposits in respect of a child care waiting list.

## PETITIONS

### PROMPT PAYMENT

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I have a petition signed by hundreds of people entitled "Support Prompt Payment Legislation in Ontario." It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas delayed payments are a harmful practice in Ontario's construction industry;

"Whereas Ontario's trade contractors incur significant costs when payments are delayed from general contractors;

"Whereas cash flow risks have forced many contractors out of business and discouraged others from investing in capital or hiring new workers;

"Whereas payment delays have led trade contractors to hiring fewer apprentices, which will lead to fewer qualified tradespeople in the future;

"Whereas prompt payment legislation offers government the opportunity to provide stimulus to the economy without spending a dime;

"We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario Legislature to support Ontario's construction industry by adopting prompt payment legislation as a means to address the payment delay issues in Ontario."

I'm happy to support this petition.

### GASOLINE PRICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have thousands of names on a petition for gas prices. I want to thank Mr. A.L. Dubord from Val Caron in my riding. It reads as follows:

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices";

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Leah to bring it to the Clerk.

### TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** Il me fait un plaisir d'apporter à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario cette pétition.

« Attendu qu'il y a un besoin criant en infrastructure de transport routier dans la province de l'Ontario;

« Attendu que d'offrir différentes alternatives ou options dans le choix du mode de transport aux citoyens aide à réduire le nombre de voitures sur les routes;

« Attendu que les transports en commun contribuent à améliorer la qualité de vie des Ontariens ainsi qu'à préserver l'environnement;

« Attendu que les résidents d'Orléans et de l'est d'Ottawa ont besoin d'une plus grande infrastructure de transport;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Soutenir le plan Faire progresser l'Ontario et la construction de la phase II du train léger sur rail (TLR), ce qui contribuera à répondre aux besoins criants en infrastructure de transport à Orléans, à l'est d'Ottawa et à travers la province. »

Il me fait un plaisir d'inscrire mon nom et de la remettre au page Brendan.

### AUTOMOTIVE DEALERS

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



"Whereas Bill 152, the Cutting Red Tape for Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2015 is a vital tool that supports Ontario's auto sector by cutting red tape for dealers and consumers when a vehicle is purchased or leased; and  
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"Whereas, in 2011, the province of Ontario conducted a pilot project on in-house vehicle licensing at two new car dealerships that was well received by the participants; and

"Whereas the province of Quebec has permitted automobile dealers to conduct in-house vehicle registrations since 2003, with 700 dealers currently participating;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario immediately pass Bill 152 into law, to promote Ontario's auto retail sector by cutting red tape for motor vehicle dealers and consumers to save them time and money."

### CAREGIVERS

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I have a petition signed by many residents of London West. It was gathered by my constituent Rachel Buttigieg. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are over 2.6 million caregivers to a family member, a friend or a neighbour in Ontario;

"Whereas these caregivers work hard to provide care to those that are most in need even though their efforts are often overlooked;

"Whereas one third of informal caregivers are distressed, which is twice as many as four years ago;

"Whereas without these caregivers, the health care system and patients would greatly suffer in Ontario;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP Gélinas's bill to proclaim the first Tuesday of every April as Family Caregiver Day to increase recognition and awareness of family caregivers in Ontario."

I totally support this petition, affix my name to it and will give it to page Leah to take to the table.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly about Ontario fluoridation legislation.

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that community water fluoridation is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations, including the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ontario Dental Association; and

"Whereas recent experience in Canadian cities that have removed fluoride from drinking water has led directly to a dramatic increase in tooth decay; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care urges support for amending the Fluoridation

Act to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing urges support for the removal of provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario before the end of the first session of the current Ontario Parliament."

I agree, affix my name to it and will have it delivered by page Alfred.

### TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

"Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn't necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

"Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

"Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

"Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses."

I support this, affix my name and send it with page Laura.

### SPEED LIMITS

**Mr. John Vanthof:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas driving at a high rate of speed has contributed to many fatal snowmobile accidents on lakes and rivers across Ontario; and

"Whereas the safety of individuals is put at risk when snowmobiles are driven at a high rate of speed on lakes,



rivers and within close proximity to people, ice huts and other vehicles;....

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(a) No person shall drive a motorized vehicle at a greater rate of speed than,

"(i) 20 km per hour within 200 feet of any person, ice hut or other vehicles

"(ii) 80 km per hour on frozen waterways...."

I'd like to submit this petition and give it to page Preston.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I also have a petition on Ontario water fluoridation legislation. I'd like to thank Meadowvale dentist Sanjukta Mohanta for having sent me so many signed petitions from my own community. It reads as follows:

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that community water fluoridation is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations, including the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ontario Dental Association; and

"Whereas recent experience in Canadian cities that have removed fluoride from drinking water has led directly to a dramatic increase in tooth decay; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care urges support for amending the Fluoridation Act to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing urges support for the removal of provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario before the end of the first session of the current Ontario Parliament."

I am pleased to sign and support this petition and to send it down with page Benjamin.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the current government under Premier Kathleen Wynne is calling for the sale of up to 60% of Hydro One shares into private ownership; and

"Whereas the decision to sell the public utility was made without any public input and the deal will continue to be done in complete secrecy; and

"Whereas the loss of majority ownership in Hydro One will force ratepayers to accept whatever changes the new owners decide, such as higher rates; and

"Whereas electricity rates are already sky-high and hurting family budgets as well as businesses; and

"Whereas ratepayers will never again have independent investigations of consumer complaints, such as the Ontario Ombudsman's damning report on failed billing; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario are the true owners of Hydro One and they do not believe the fire sale of Hydro One is in their best interest;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To protect Ontario ratepayers by stopping the sale of Hydro One."

I fully support it, will affix my name and send it with page Brendan.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "Nurses Know—Petition for Better Care.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas providing high-quality, universal, public health care is crucial for a fair and thriving Ontario; and

"Whereas years of underfunding have resulted in cuts to registered nurses (RNs) and hurt patient care; and

"Whereas, in 2015 alone, Ontario lost more than 1.5 million hours of RN care due to cuts; and

"Whereas procedures are being off-loaded into private clinics not subject to hospital legislation; and

"Whereas funded services are being cut from hospitals and are not being provided in the community; and

"Whereas cutting skilled care means patients suffer more complications, readmissions and death;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Implement a moratorium on RN cuts;

"Commit to restoring hospital base operating funding to at least cover the costs of inflation and population growth;

"Create a fully-funded multi-year health human resources plan to bring Ontario's ratio of registered nurses to population up to the national average;

"Ensure hospitals have enough resources to continue providing safe, quality and integrated care for clinical procedures and stop plans for moving such procedures into private, unaccountable clinics."

I sign this petition and give it to page Laura to deliver.

### SAUBLE BEACH LAND CLAIM

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are serious concerns with the government's policy involving third parties named in land claim disputes in Ontario, namely the Sauble Beach land claim;



"Whereas the government of Ontario and the government of Canada have equally failed to include protection of the third parties named in this land claim dispute, specifically they have abandoned any responsibility in honouring crown patent grants and in the case of Ontario, honouring the land registry system;

"Whereas there is no indication that any effort is being made to protect the interest of the public or third parties named in the Sauble Beach land claim dispute;

"Whereas the current process concerning the dissemination of information to third parties named in this land claim dispute is deeply flawed;

"Whereas there is no consultation with the third parties as to crown land planning and decision-making nor any engagement in a process that must be open as per the MNRF's publicly stated principles on land negotiations;

"Whereas third parties named in the land claim should be consulted and their concerns should be reflected in negotiations;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to do the following:

"To review its guiding principles for land claim negotiations and the respective roles of Canada and Ontario in settling claims in an effort to enhance protection of third parties and all citizens affected by land disputes, to provide open communication and accountability to all pertinent stakeholders, and to provide appropriate financial support to ensure this matter is dealt with in a fair and timely manner."

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I fully support it and will affix my name and send it with page Claire.

## CURRICULUM

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to read this petition for the first time in the Legislature.

"Whereas for six years the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) listened to thousands of former students of residential schools and their families testify to the devastating legacy of this national policy of assimilation;

"Whereas the TRC calls upon 'the federal, provincial and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with survivors, aboriginal peoples and educators, to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties and aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for kindergarten to grade 12 students' (CA 62.1);

"Whereas on July 15, 2015, Canada's Premiers indicated their support for all 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action and said they would act on them in their own provinces and territories;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario urge the government of Ontario to fully implement such a curriculum for kindergarten through grade 12."

It is my pleasure to affix my signature to this petition and give this to page Aadil.

## WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It gives me great pleasure to rise this afternoon to present this petition that's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province."

I agree with this petition, will affix my name and send it to the table with page Marthangi.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND LOW-CARBON ECONOMY ACT, 2016

### LOI DE 2016 SUR L'ATTÉNUATION DU CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE ET UNE ÉCONOMIE SOBRE EN CARBONE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 12, 2016, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas / Projet de loi 172, Loi concernant les gaz à effet de serre.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** When we last debated this bill in this Legislature, the member for Nickel Belt had the floor. I'm assuming she wants to continue.

The member for Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Speaker. You'll have to forgive me if I do a little bit of a recap, because it could be that over this busy weekend we just had, a few people forgot where I was at. So I will recap and then continue.

Basically, the goal of the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, Bill 172, is to create a cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gases and to protect the environment, to help Ontarians transition to a low-carbon economy, and to coordinate such actions with other jurisdictions.

Let's be clear: New Democrats support cap-and-trade, but we also support a system that is fair, that is effective and that is transparent.

Some of the ideas that I will put forward are really to put forward some constructive ideas as to how we can make this bill better than what it is now.

You all know that I represent a jurisdiction in northern Ontario. Every day or so, I stand in the House, like I did a few minutes ago, and read into the record petitions sent to me by hundreds and sometimes thousands of names. Every week, when I go back to my constituency, I go to the office and there will be another pile of petitions that all say the same thing: "We are being gouged at the pumps in northern Ontario." We are paying a price discrepancy between other areas of the north, in Sudbury and Nickel Belt, which I represent, and it boggles the mind. It is impossible to justify that bringing gas to Sturgeon Falls is 20 cents a litre cheaper than bringing gas to Sudbury. It makes no sense.

When we see things that say we will add over four cents in tax on to the price of gas, this has severe repercussions for the people I represent. In most of my riding, there is no public transit. If there was public transit—and in some parts of riding, there is. In Val Caron and Hanmer, there is a little bit of public transit. People use the public transit. There are such great distances that if you can get from Hanmer to downtown for \$3, the price of a bus ticket rather than the price of gas, it is worth it and people use it. But in most of my riding, this is not an option that is available. The only option available is to drive your car.

So, when we see a tax on gas in areas of the province where you have no other option, it is hitting people in the pocketbook. It is hitting people who already have a hard time making ends meet. This is not fair, and this is something that people are really opposed to. I can show you stacks of petitions. Although I'm not allowed to use props, I can show you stacks of petitions. Every week, I get the same thing. They come from all over my riding, and they are angry about the price of gas.

Now we have a program of the government that will further increase the price of gas in areas of the province that have no choice. Don't get me wrong; people in the

north support a green economy. People in the north want to make sure that we have a healthy environment and that we protect our environment, just like every other place in Ontario, but they don't want to be the ones who pay for somebody else to enjoy, and this is the path we seem to be going down.

The other complaint I receive the most often is about the price of electricity. My riding was one of the lucky ones where the smart meter—I have a hard time calling them "smart," Speaker, and you'll understand why. They did not work. For months that turned into years, a lot of people—hundreds of people—in my riding got hydro bills that made no sense. A hydro bill for a camp that has burned down—it does not exist anymore—and you get a \$300-a-month hydro bill. How can that be? The camp is gone, yet the meter still reads and still sends reports.

We had this couple from Hanmer in my riding—a \$2,000 hydro bill for a camp where the breaker has been turned off for the winter. How could that be? Well, I'll thank the previous Ombudsman for the great work he did. He did receive over 100 complaints from my riding as to how poorly those smart meters were performing in Nickel Belt. Now they have been taken down. We still have smart meters attached to our houses, but they're not being used; they're not being read. They can send the information they want. This is not how we get billed anymore. But a lot of people went through a lot of hardship before we got there.

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I'm putting that forward because you have to take into account the ever-increasing cost of electricity. When you're talking about a low-carbon economy and you say "no more fossil fuels," we all get this. At the same time, you have to realize that when hydro doesn't work, then we back up.

The last thing I want to put on the record—because I see my time is almost gone—is Mattagami. Mattagami First Nation has put forward a request for a small generating project. The request for proposal came out that they wanted 200 megawatts of renewable energy, and 75 would be into hydro, run-of-the-river. They put forward a request, a good proposal, in collaboration with OPG, and it got turned down. It got turned down because they say there was no room on the grid to carry their little project of 7.5 megawatts, I think it was. How could that be?

Mattagami is at the end of the line. They have power failures all the time. I've read into the record before weeks after weeks of power failures. Yet, when they put forward a solid project that would bring them run-of-the-river so that there would be increased power on the grid, they are told that there's no room on the grid. Why? Because some portion of the grid has been promised to a developer down south, when nobody knows who that is and we know full well they will never come to Mattagami.

There is something wrong. Let the people of the north have their fair share. Treat us like you would like to be treated. Then there would be a whole lot more support for Bill 172.



I thank you, Speaker, and I appreciate your patience with me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** It's a pleasure to stand up and speak about Bill 172. I believe it's important that we know what the proceeds from cap-and-trade are going to be used for. This is a very important part of the bill.

This bill sets out the types of initiatives that may be funded from the greenhouse gas reduction account established from cap-and-trade proceeds. Initiatives must be reasonably likely to reduce or support the reduction of greenhouse gases to be eligible to be funded from the greenhouse gas reduction account. Eligible initiatives include those relating to energy use, land use and buildings, infrastructure, transportation, industry, agriculture and forestry, waste management, education and training, and research and innovation.

This bill ensures transparency with respect to the use of the proceeds from cap-and-trade by requiring the preparation of a public report every year on funds flowing into and out of the GGRA and a description of the initiatives funded as a result, including their relationship to the climate change action plan.

I know that one of the biggest offenders in regard to greenhouse gases are large buildings. Hopefully, money from cap-and-trade can be used towards retrofitting those buildings and reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from those buildings. That's a big initiative.

We also heard about trying to help people in small, rural communities so that they are reducing their greenhouse gas emissions as well.

I fully support Bill 172.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'll be talking about this in much more detail later this afternoon, but I just want to bring up a few points.

This is one of those things where, at the end of the day, there are going to be higher costs for natural gas, gasoline, diesel and propane at a time when people in my riding are telling me that their hydro costs are already the biggest challenge that they are facing. Many people just can't do that. They can't afford any more changes, so we're very concerned.

And I'm doubly concerned when someone by the name of Greg Sorbara, a former Liberal finance minister, suggests that this is a cash grab in the name of the environment, plain and simple. He suggests that this is nothing more than a new tax to generate money for the government.

I'm going to quote him. I'm quoting Greg Sorbara, former Liberal finance minister: "There's no evidence, anywhere in the world that ... cap-and-trade ... actually does work to significantly reduce carbon emissions."

So at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we're certainly concerned. We want to make sure that we do the right thing. But here, again, is someone who has been within that party suggesting that it doesn't work.

He continued: "Until I see that evidence ... I have to be a little bit skeptical about the whole scheme, other than it's going to bring a lot of new money into the government."

He goes on to say at another time—again, this is Liberal Finance Minister Greg Sorbara, in a former government here; he highlighted this very concern when he said, "Cap-and-trade requires a very significant bureaucracy. And this government has a very large bureaucracy. The last thing it needs is to add hundreds of people to the offices around Queen's Park to deal with cap-and-trade."

Another point that's been made in the debate is that there is a lot of cap-and-trade fraud in many of the countries where this has been introduced. It makes me very nervous that that could happen. Again, at the end of the day, we all need to focus on programs and services that are truly going to move the needle: things that are going to make a difference to climate change, to our environment and to the health of the Ontarians who are going to be paying these bills.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I'm going to talk for 20 minutes later this afternoon. I'll bring up a lot of points. I certainly welcome the opportunity to debate this matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I listened intently to my colleague the member from Nickel Belt. I always appreciate her comments in this House, because more often than not she focuses on the residents of her area, who are much the same as the residents of my area; we're neighbouring.

I don't think anybody in northern Ontario doesn't want to help fight climate change, but there are certain things in northern Ontario that aren't faced by the people who I think authored this bill. The simple fact of raising the cost of things to force people to stop using them is a fine idea if you have alternatives. But simply raising the cost of fossil fuels to force people to use the alternative when there is no alternative is very difficult. That's something that the member from Nickel Belt focused on.

The member from Barrie had some nice remarks about how great this bill was going to work. She had a nice quote: that it was "reasonably likely" going to result in something. Well, this is called questions and comments, and I have a question for the government: How are people in northern Ontario reasonably likely going to pay the bills caused by this when there is no alternative? There is no public transit. We had daily bus service; that was cut. We had daily train service in northeastern Ontario, and guess what? That was cut. We have people now who can't afford the hydro to heat their homes, and this government comes out, "Well, we're going to have to heat everything with hydro." We are looking desperately to find other means to get out of using hydro to heat our homes, because we can't afford it, and yet this government says, "Use more hydro."

Again, that doesn't reflect what people in our part of the world are actually feeling. That's a huge, huge issue. The people in northern Ontario are reasonably likely going to get hurt very badly by this scheme.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I am delighted to have an opportunity to speak to the member from Nickel Belt's comments on Bill 172. It's a little disappointing to hear the members of the opposition and the third party decry the legislation because of a lack of options. We heard the same argument from the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane.

Let us be a little bit more wide-thinking about opportunities. Yes, gas will go up for the automobiles, and you may not be able to take public transit, but guess what? There will be a dedicated fund, estimated to be \$1.9 billion, which we can invest in your local homes, we can invest in infrastructure in your communities, we can invest in transmission lines, so that the First Nations in Mattagami will actually have an opportunity to get off diesel. Because one of the greatest climate change initiatives we will get out of the north is that if we take community after community from diesel—which is a fossil fuel. I would like to remind the members that diesel fuel is a fossil fuel, and the objective here is to get out of the fossil fuel business and get into the electricity business.

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I know that First Nations across Ontario in remote communities want us to have a dedicated fund which will allow us to get transmission into their community and get them off very, very expensive hydro. That's what this bill will do.

If you took the members from the opposition's point of view, where you had a tax-and-dividend scheme, the member from Nickel Belt's constituents would be spending more for gasoline and we'd just give them a cheque back. If I use their argument, they would do nothing with that cheque because there are no options. What we're saying is, there will be a dedicated fund, we will give them options and maybe an option will be that we could get all the guides and your remote fishing communities on four-stroke engines because the climate change benefit of being on a four-stroke outboard as opposed to a two-stroke is an incredibly important direction, or maybe some of those 4 by 4 F-150s—let's start developing pickup trucks that are hybrids so that we can use gas more efficiently.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Nickel Belt can now reply.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I had a reply, but I have to say something to the member from Beaches-East York. I don't know the last time you shopped for pickup trucks, but those already exist. There's already a hybrid pickup, and there's already a pickup that goes from four to six to eight.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** And four-strokes as well.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** And four-strokes as well.

Let's go back to the bill. I want to thank the members from Barrie, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and Timiskaming-Cochrane for their comments. At the end of the

day, I still want to focus on—you have to realize that the people in the north feel like they're not being treated fairly. When I come back to Mattagami, Chief Naveau called me to say, "They came out, they asked for a proposal, we answered with a small proposal," and then they were told no, that they have to save room on the grid for some foreign investor who may or may not—let's face it, Speaker: Nobody will come to Mattagami to do a run-of-the-river project. Run-of-the-river hydroelectricity, the cleanest, greenest, cheapest, most renewable form of energy—they want it. They have the river to do this. They had put forward a proposal and then they're turned down: "There's not enough room on the grid." This is an insult.

Not enough room on the grid? There's not enough power making its way to Mattagami to support the people there. They get brownouts and complete power failures all the time. They put forward something that is right in line with the green economy and with this bill to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and then they get turned down. Somebody from down south needs to have access to the grid at some point.

This is insulting, Speaker. This doesn't move people forward, and it further polarizes northern Ontario as the one who will be paying for this but not getting any benefit.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I will be sharing my time with the member for Ottawa-Orléans and the member for Sudbury.

I just want to offer some comments about the targets of the bill. What is the fundamental premise of the bill? The fundamental premise is that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is vital to fighting climate change. That's the bottom line.

Ontario has set targets for reductions to greenhouse gas emissions relative to our 1990 levels. We have committed to a 15% reduction by the year 2020, a 37% reduction by 2030 and an 80% reduction by 2050. What this act is going to do is it's going to enshrine those targets in legislation so that they're just not things that we're talking about or speculating about; it's things that we're going to do by virtue of legislative authority.

Another key element of the bill is the development of a climate change action plan. The bill requires the government to prepare a plan detailing the actions that it's going to take that will enable Ontario to meet our emission reduction targets—the ones that I've just set out.

We have worked with our New Democrat colleagues to strengthen the government's accountability in reporting our progress under that action plan. My thanks to the third party for that.

Amendments were made in committee, after hearing from the third party, to require that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change publish a progress report every year rather than at least every five years.



That's very, very important because we want to stay on top of this file, we want to stay on top of those targets, to manage the targets.

A third element of Bill 172 is the cap-and-trade provisions. The bill now before the Legislature provides a strong foundation for Ontario's cap-and-trade program and establishes the framework for its implementation.

I want to say a few words about transparency and accountability because that is very important in the massive piece of legislative change that is contemplated in this bill. The government has included a number of other elements in the proposed legislation to ensure transparency and accountability. The bill would require an annual report on the funds credited and charged to the greenhouse gas reduction account as well as a description of initiatives for which the funds were used. It would require government to publish reports on the use of cap-and-trade proceeds, which will be invested in the various initiatives that reduce or support the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Under the proposed legislation, before any amounts are paid in respect of any initiative, the minister is required—required—to review the initiative and provide an evaluation of that initiative to Treasury Board. As you all know, appearing before Treasury Board is a very vigorous exercise. In his or her review, the minister must consider a number of things: the potential emissions reduction of the initiative; how the initiative relates to achieving the province's greenhouse gas reduction targets; how the initiative relates to other potential planned or funded initiatives; and how the initiative relates to the climate change action plan.

The bill, as amended in committee, also now includes a requirement for the minister's review to consider whether the initiative is also likely to assist low-income households and vulnerable communities with their transition to a low-carbon economy. In summary, this government recognizes the disproportionate impact that carbon pricing can have on low-income households and supports the steps that we are going to take to transition them to a low-carbon economy.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to let my colleagues now pick up the debate from here, but just let me conclude. This is a transformative piece of legislation, and that's why my comments about transparency and accountability are so important, and why those elements of the bill are so important to the successful implementation of this act.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Ottawa—Orléans.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** I would say that it's always a pleasure to rise and speak in this House, and particularly on Bill 172, the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016. I know my colleagues will be sharing a little bit their thoughts on how good this bill is, but I just want to bring maybe a different perspective today. Most of us in this House—and I say “most of us”—understand that the climate is changing and that the actions we take today will impact our children and certainly our grandchildren. The actions

we are taking and putting forward in this House are to address the changing climate. We see greater variation in what were normal weather patterns. We've seen an increase in tornadoes, in the destruction they can bring, such as the tornado that brought destruction to Goderich in 2011.

All of us in this House should know by now that it is well established that climate change is happening and it is man-made. I hope that all of us can agree on this fact. In particular, I hope that the PCs have truly come around to the fact that climate change is a reality and we must start to mitigate its harmful effects now.

I was present at their convention a few months ago in Ottawa, when their leader curiously stated that he believes in a carbon tax. That was quite interesting, that he decided the environment was something that indeed needs protection. It's interesting, given his presence in a federal government that cut back on protecting our environment; that rolled back protection for our lakes and our rivers; a government that turned off the federal funding for the Experimental Lakes Area.

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Where was their leader then? He was complicit in part of the reduction of environmental protection and the muzzling of scientists. And where has his caucus been on this issue? Many of them had petitions on their websites that sought to block Bill 172 even after their leader announced the party would support a carbon tax. They even updated their logo, which has questionable aesthetics, but to highlight that they are committed to the environment, they included a leaf of some sort in their logo.

All this smoke and mirrors on their part is to hide the fact that their newfound change of heart is to hide their leader's previous record on the environment as a Harper backbencher. While the environment should be a non-partisan issue, their conversion on the way to Damascus seems to be more painted in politics than principles.

So, while I do hope some of my colleagues on the other side of the House truly have embraced a new attitude on protecting the environment and supporting this bill, I remain skeptical about their newfound ideals past the next election.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the official opposition members to please come to order.

The member for Sudbury.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** It truly is my pleasure to be able to rise to speak to Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas.

If you'll bear with me, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to use a little bit of an analogy. If we were all running towards a wall that was dead ahead of us, and you were running at it full speed, when do you slow down and change directions? Is it at one metre before? Is it 10 metres before; 100 metres before? Is it when you were a few kilometres back and you had people telling you, “Don't worry, the wall is just a mirage. Keep running; it's okay. Everything stays the same. Just keep running”? When do you actually veer off?



There's a phrase in the English language, and I think it's the most dangerous phrase in the English language: "We've always done it this way." Well, if we've always done it this way and we keep running towards that wall without veering off, what's going to happen? Keep our fingers crossed and hope that it's a mirage?

At some point, we have to recognize that we have to veer off. We have to change what we're doing. We have to realize that our current path towards the wall is going to end up with one thing, and that's not what we want.

Bill 172 is allowing us to veer off from running towards that wall because none of us want to hit that wall. I don't think anyone in this Legislature wants to hit that wall.

But it was interesting, Mr. Speaker, to hear from the opposition earlier talking about higher costs. I recognize that everyone is concerned about higher costs. We have plans in place to mitigate those costs: a \$325-million Green Investment Fund just to start. But those higher costs were all they could talk about. They didn't talk about higher temperatures and how that will have an effect. We see those effects happening right now in my own riding of Sudbury: floods in Sudbury. We could go to Toronto. Right across our great country, climate change is having an effect now.

Are we still running towards that wall, knowing? Are we not veering? Do we not want to make that change?

That's what this bill is doing. It is allowing us to start with the veering away so we can ensure that our children and our children's children, and I think if we look—we've been talking a lot about First Nations: seven generations. They can look back and say, "This is when we made the change. This is when we veered." And that is so important. It is so important for us to be able to do that, because what we're doing with this bill—I think there are two pieces that are key to recognize. We want to have reduction targets and action plans, and the cap-and-trade program will be using the proceeds to help both one and two.

So if we're looking at our emission reduction targets and action plans, this bill—establish in a statute the government's existing greenhouse gas emission reduction targets: 15% below 1990 levels by 2020, 37% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. We want to establish a framework for reviewing and increasing targets, as well as for the establishment of additional interim targets.

So yes, those are some lofty goals that we need to accomplish, but they are important goals. If we don't start trying to achieve some type of reduction and some type of target, what's to say, then, that we just go and pick a number out of the air? Fortunately, we can actually see in the air now because we don't have smog days anymore in Ontario. What was it? In 2014 was the last time we had smog days in Ontario. As a former asthmatic, I think that's something that we should all be proud of, and for all people who want to be able to breathe our air and drink our water, what we're doing as a government I think is important.

It's also important to recognize that this government is preparing this climate change action plan to enable the people of Ontario to achieve our targets and announce progress reports annually—sorry, not annually, but every five years. I think that's important too, to recognize that while we're reducing, we're also going to be monitoring to make sure that every five years—that if this is what our goal is supposed to be; as I said before, 15% below 1990 levels by 2020, 37% by 2030—we need to have targets, and that's what we're talking about.

If we're looking at some of the provisions when it comes to cap-and-trade and the use of those proceeds, this bill addresses, as I said, the emissions calculations; the reporting and verification; the requirements to submit allowances and credits to match the GHG emissions; registration of mandatory, voluntary and market participants; the creation and distribution of allowances and credits; the establishment of an offset program—and that's important for those of us in the north—trading; fees; and market operations and oversight, including provisions for a strong compliance and enforcement regime. Those are key.

But when you're looking at the initiatives that are set out in this bill that may be funded from the greenhouse gas reduction account that's going to be established from cap-and-trade proceeds, Mr. Speaker—please indulge me as I talk about this list—eligible initiatives, including those relating to energy use—again, if we go back to my initial analogy, if we're still running towards that wall, ways that we can help veer off is looking at using the proceeds from this fund, from the cap-and-trade fund, from the Green Investment Fund and from the \$1.9 billion that's going to be there for energy use.

Land use and buildings: I think that's something those of us in the north really need to talk about. We have many buildings where their windows need to be replaced, you're still on electric heat, and now we're going to have incentives to go geothermal and many other programs. Those are the types of things that we'll be able to invest in—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I know they don't like hearing the important facts, Mr. Speaker, but I'm more than happy to keep talking. Thank you.

These are things that we can continue to invest in. This Green Investment Fund is \$325 million. It is huge for us in the north, because we know that we're going to have avenues that we can actually start renovating our homes and those types of things. Land use and buildings is one of those things that we can actually use these dollars for.

Infrastructure: We often hear the words "resilient infrastructure." As I talked in the opening of my speech, I said we had flooding in Sudbury. Part of that relates to not having the necessary infrastructure in place to deal with these 100-year storms that are not just happening every 100 years; they're now happening every few years, unfortunately. So what we need to do is start investing in our infrastructure, helping our municipalities deal with



these frequent storms. That's something I know that we, as a government, have recognized and have made sure that we will allow our municipalities to invest in.

Transportation is another key one; transportation and public transit, especially in the north. I know we've heard from opposition members that the public transit system isn't always as readily available, but that's something that we can start looking at and working with municipalities and making it available. Rather than always saying, "No, no, no" and keep running towards that wall, Mr. Speaker, you start having the conversations. That's what we're doing with this.

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Industry: I've spoken with mining. I've spoken with the forestry sector. I've spoken with the steel sector. All of them understand that we need to do something and all of them recognize that we need to have a dialogue. They're all doing what they can, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased and proud to be able to come from a mining community that just this past week had a session on what they called the Sudbury Protocol. The Sudbury Protocol is looking at the regreening efforts that Sudbury has made since the 1970s: over 12 million trees have been planted. Hopefully I got that number correct; otherwise, my constituents will be calling me and letting me know. But 12 million trees have been.

We can now drink from 330 lakes. Back in my day and back in the 1970s, we had 90 of those 330 lakes within our city boundaries that were dead lakes. We've regreened. We're growing. We're making sure that we're investing. I'm very proud to come from a mining community that actually recognizes the importance of being green, Mr. Speaker.

Agriculture and forestry is something that we've also been working diligently with. I know the Minister of Agriculture has been working with farmers. The forestry sector: I'm meeting with them a little later today. They're actually very interested in the offset piece—again, inside Bill 172—and I know many of these amendments were also brought forward by the opposition and were taken and put into this.

Waste management: Education and training is another piece that I think is important, Mr. Speaker. I know my time is getting close to running out, but education and training is so key to make sure that—as I said in my analogy, we're all running towards this wall. I said "you" initially, Mr. Speaker. Not you running, but in terms of the analogy. But we're all running. Every single person in this province is running towards that wall. How we decide as a society and as a government to veer off and change, to make those necessary changes, to ensure that we actually mitigate the current climate change that we're seeing and do our best to adapt—I think education and training are key.

Research and innovation: That is so fundamental to cap-and-trade and the program that we're now going to be involved with with Quebec and California. Because now we're going to be part of the leadership that's making sure that we have innovation, that we have

research available to ensure that—coming from a mining community, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to use this—the next best CO<sub>2</sub> scrubber that can be put in a smelter to make sure that the CO<sub>2</sub> that is coming out of the smokestacks that Sudbury is so well known for—that we have the next CO<sub>2</sub> scrubber that's there to help them reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions even more.

I'm very, very pleased to be able to stand here today to talk about an amended bill that is doing the right thing to really stop us running towards that wall, veering off when we're supposed to, to make sure that our province is doing what we can to ensure that we're living in a better, cleaner, safer world.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I just want to start off by saying I was listening to all the speakers on this issue, but we'll go from back to forward. The member from Sudbury was speaking about the people of Ontario running, and he was speaking of a wall. But the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, are running, and they're trying to get a handle on their expenses because the government keeps making it more expensive to live in this province, and their pay is not going up to meet it. Obviously, they're running. I think the real problem we have is that every time they get closer to being able to make ends meet, the government sticks their foot out and trips them again. This bill is one of those trips again that, in fact, is going to make it more and more difficult for them to live and to make ends meet.

The first speaker was speaking about an action plan. As I listened to the member from Beaches–East York, he was talking about that action plan and how we're going to get out of fossil fuel use in this province and we're all going to go all to electricity. Most of my people can't afford the electricity they have to buy now. I think them all going to electricity just isn't feasible, and, again, another foot is coming out. As people are trying to make ends meet, another government foot is tripping them up.

Then we hear another one that says, the member for Beaches–East York—oh, no, that's the one that was out of fossil fuel.

We heard speaking about the buildings in Sudbury need new windows, and they're still on electricity. Now, how does that fit with this plan that the government is doing? We're going to put them all on electricity, but in Sudbury they want to close down the electric-heated homes and go—I would presume—to a fossil fuel to heat them up so we can be able to pay the bills to heat our homes, because presently, going with hydro, as the member suggested—it's far too expensive to heat those homes with hydro.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, I think the people of Ontario are running. They're running behind everything that this government is proposing and their economics are behind. They're not making life more affordable for Ontarians, Speaker; it becomes harder and harder to



make ends meet with the way this government is running this province, and that takes me to the part talking about the finance piece that this government wants to propose.

They want to create a Green Investment Fund. People have questions around that, because in Quebec, they also had that green investment fund, and it wasn't working like it was supposed to. We're not sure that that money will actually be dedicated to the cap-and-trade, to this environment piece.

We saw it when there were changes to the Trillium Fund. They were supposed to be dedicated last December. They dismantled the Trillium Fund as a special-purpose account dedicated to infrastructure. When the government talks about setting up another fund, people have concerns that this money will be used for that purpose, and rightfully so.

Even this morning, the Minister of Energy talked about the income revenue that was generated. It was, I think I heard, around \$300 million. I have to check the figures; I was trying to find it on Hansard, but I haven't been able to verify. Our critic for energy questioned that income revenue from the energy file and said, "No, if that's the amount you've generated, you've actually spent \$1.9 billion just to actually make this income of \$300 million." So playing with the numbers is a big concern.

This green energy fund that the Liberals say that they are going to set up—we have extreme questions and wonder if they are going to use it for the purpose that it's intended.

I do want to say that I'm glad that the energy minister is going to be reporting once a year, because I think it's important that we watch this very closely.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, when it comes to climate change, you either believe that it's real or you don't. Now, on this side of the House, we accept the science. We accept the overwhelming weight of evidence. We believe that it's real. On the opposition side, it seems that one opposition party sort of whispers that perhaps they might accept that this is real, but then act as if it isn't. So you either believe that it's real or it's not.

If you believe that climate change is for real, then you're willing to do something about it or you're not. On the other side of the House, both opposition parties don't appear to be willing to do anything about it. But if you believe that it's real, you've got to be willing to do something about it.

The proposal that the province of Ontario has set out is very much in line with the leading jurisdictions in North America, of which we are one of three. The others are California and Quebec. We are willing to do something about climate change.

If you believe that it's real and you are willing to do something about it, then you're either going to get on with it or you aren't. The difference between those of us in government and those of us in opposition is that we have decided that we're going to get on with it. We

believe that climate change is real. We have a plan. We're willing to do something about it, and now the province is going to get on with it.

Speaker, one could say, "Well, can you predict with absolute accuracy what the future will hold?" You can no sooner do that in this field than you can in any other. But are we acting in a prudent, reasonable, planned and methodical fashion? I think that what this bill says is that yes, the province of Ontario has done everything that is reasonable and prudent and has a methodical, orderly approach to planning and mitigating climate change.

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I listened with interest to the comments from members on the other side of the House, the government side. They talk about science. It seems to me that science is only believed if it serves your purpose, and that's what we've certainly seen with this government on different issues. We can see that with what they've done to some segments of agriculture, with the neonics issue that we're facing in rural Ontario, with the corn and bean farmers.

It's interesting to me, when you read through the whole thing, you read through the budget bill and you read through this and that, that this is pretty much a fund for this government to pay for some of the projects they've got on the books. There's going to be a tremendous amount of money made by the government with this initiative. Certainly that is not hard to prove. I will be making my remarks a little bit later, and I will show you, Speaker, just exactly what this money is going to go for.

It's mostly because this government has run out of ways to raise money. Because of their spending habits in the past number of years, it's been difficult for them to get control of their deficits—in fact, they never have. Also, the debt they've accumulated over the last 13 years, I believe, of being in office speaks to their incompetence running the economy.

Climate change certainly is an issue that we have to face, but to do it in this way is nothing but a cash grab scheme that this government has come up with in order to tax the good people of Ontario and raise money because they can't manage their funds.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** One of the government members can now reply. I recognize the member for Sudbury.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to reply and comment on the two minutes brought forward by my colleagues from the opposition and my government colleague as well.

The last comment—I'm sure the honourable member doesn't see anything to do with climate change as fun. We're having to do this because of decisions made in the past by societies in general. We need to actually fix our planet. We need to fix our planet for future generations, and this bill is actually doing that. It is giving us access to a Green Investment Fund to ensure that we can start mitigating that climate change, because the science is



clear. It isn't the science of this government; it's the scientists who have actually told us that if we don't do something now, there won't be a world for us to worry about in decades. There won't be a world for our families in the future.

As I always said, I respect the First Nations and what they say about planning for seven generations. We need to ensure that that's what we're doing here, and that's what this bill does: It allows us to be able to work with First Nations, work with municipalities, work with industry and work with families and households to make sure that we can actually address climate change.

There are going to be some costs associated with this, Mr. Speaker. No one denies that, and that's what we should be debating about: making sure that we're using our funds correctly. We're talking about that, but all we're hearing on the other side is nothing about the climate, nothing about the change. We want to ensure on this side of the House that those organizations, families and governments all have the resources necessary to bring forth the changes that we need to actually mitigate climate change as best we can.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** It's my pleasure this afternoon to have an opportunity to speak to Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas, which was introduced by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

We, the Progressive Conservatives, certainly see that climate change is an important issue that we have to deal with. The question is whether this plan the government has come up with, their very complicated cap-and-trade plan, is the right approach or not. Frankly, I would call it social engineering when you read articles which I will get to that were in the *Globe and Mail* today with some of the proposed changes the government wants to bring about.

In my recent trips around the north and as northern critic, I've got to tell you that there's a lot of uncertainty when you talk to businesses about what's going on with the cap-and-trade plan. In December, I, along with our leader, Patrick Brown, did a week-long road trip starting in North Bay and heading all the way up to Dryden and back. We made many stops along the way and had lots of discussion about various issues. It's interesting how often concern with the uncertainty with regard to cap-and-trade came up.

For example, we toured Hemlo gold mine and had a good look at that large open-pit mine at Hemlo. Their big concern was the uncertainty of what it was going to cost them for cap-and-trade. They can't change the price of gold. All they can do is manage their costs. They were guessing that it might cost, for that one mine, about \$3 million a year. That extra cost shortens the life of the mine. It can even lead to the shutting down of the mine.

We drove up, as I mentioned, to Dryden, stopped and toured Domtar there, which is a big pulp and paper plant. They were very concerned, stating that they have already done a lot of work to reduce their greenhouse gases. They

were concerned about whether that would be recognized and uncertain about what it would cost them, again. They were guessing millions of dollars. Of course, the forest sector is one that's very much in sync with the environment. I'll get to that in a few minutes. A pulp mill is very important for all the various forestry operations in a given general area, because it relies on lumber mills; it relies on chips. It's important to have a pulp and paper mill to have a successful forestry sector in a given geographic area, so a lot of concern there.

Just last week, I was up north in Timmins. I happened to run into some people from Goldcorp checking into the hotel, and the number one thing that came up was, they were actually looking at their energy costs and concerned with the uncertainty with regard to cap-and-trade and just what it was going to cost. They mentioned that they had been talking to deputy ministers, and assistant deputy ministers and even they don't have answers for them, which makes you really concerned, especially given the track record of this government when it comes to trying to plan things out and engineer things. You just need to look at other great schemes they've come up with. Whether you believe in what the goal is or not, you look at the Green Energy Act: Sure, it's a good idea to switch to more green energy, but look at the way this government did it.

We need to look at the Auditor General's report of 2015 where it points out that "electricity consumers have had to pay \$9.2 billion more ... for power from renewable electricity projects over the 20-year contract terms under the ministry's current guaranteed-price renewable program than they would have paid under the previous procurement program." To make that clear, that means you could have achieved the same result but saved \$9.2 billion. That money has all gone on to hydro bills around the province. They didn't accomplish anything more. They just spent an extra \$9.2 billion.

When it comes to this cap-and-trade program, it's about the way they are going about it, and do you trust this government with their various schemes they are coming up with?

We've heard from the environment minister in a report in the newspaper that he thinks we should not be using natural gas, that that's a bad thing. I tell you, if you visit the folks in Parry Sound-Muskoka—personally, I'd love to be able to heat my home with natural gas, because it's by far the most efficient way to heat your home. They want to switch everyone to pure electric. Well, in my riding, if you do that, people can't afford to heat their homes, especially with the huge increases, the 80% increases, we've seen in electricity bills. People won't be able to heat their homes.

My next question for the government would be: Are you going to outlaw wood heating as well? Because a lot of people in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka heat with wood, partly because they can't afford the electricity costs. You want to social-engineer them all on to only electricity. There are a lot of people in my riding that simply will not be able to afford to pay their bills with



that plan of yours. The idea of doing away with natural gas, something that lots of people would love to be on, just seems a little bit out there, shall I say.

1430

We heard the Minister of the Environment say last week that he wants to shut down nuclear in 10 years. Well, nuclear power, just in case he wasn't aware, is 60% of the electricity of the province of Ontario, and I would argue it's a clean energy that is not emitting greenhouse gases except in the construction phase of a nuclear plant. And yet, the Minister of the Environment wants to shut down 60% of the electricity generating, the baseload in this province. So he's switching everybody to pure electric, doing away with natural gas, but doing away with 60% of the generation that is clean, green generation.

You wonder why we're a little skeptical about this social engineering scheme you've come up with. Especially based on your past track record, I think it's fairly obvious. Again, with your other scheme, your Green Energy Act, the Auditor General's report was talking about how much extra consumers are paying:

"Given the current comparatively high prices that consumers pay for electricity in Ontario, it is especially critical that Ontario determine how it will meet its future electricity demand in the most cost-effective manner. Ontario's residential and small business electricity consumers have already had an 80% increase in the electricity portion of their bills, including global adjustment fees, between 2004 and 2014. In particular, global adjustment fees, which are the excess payments to generators over the market price, amounted to \$37 billion—that's a B; it's hard to get your head around—"from 2006 to 2014, and these payments are projected to cost electricity consumers another \$133 billion from 2015 to 2032."

The numbers are so big, it's hard to get your head around them. That's the Auditor General of Ontario, not me, that's coming up with these figures.

Last week up in Timmins, another gold mine that we toured wasn't big enough to qualify for the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, so they are faced with paying the global adjustment. They pointed out that the global adjustment was 50% of their electricity bill—50% of it—and that they were paying—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I guess this government just doesn't care about whether they create any jobs in this province or whether people can afford to pay their electricity bills, based on the crazy schemes they're coming up with.

The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, in his speech—I believe it was at the Economic Club last week—stated that you shouldn't buy a car with an internal combustion engine; that you should only buy electric vehicles. That's so out of touch with the reality of rural and northern Ontario, where at least 50% of the people are driving pickup trucks, and that's the reality of what they need: You don't have public transit, so you have to rely on an automobile. And yet, in this fantasy world of

the Minister of the Environment, he's going to miraculously switch everyone to pure electric vehicles.

I would ask the Minister of the Environment or the government members what that means for the auto sector in Ontario, which is billions and billions of dollars, and thousands of jobs in Ontario. Have they thought that out? How many Teslas are made in Ontario? How many pure electric vehicles are made in Ontario? How many hybrids are made in Ontario?

I was thinking—I mean, I drive a hybrid. I drive a Ford Escape hybrid, which is a very good vehicle. I do it mainly to try to save some money on gas. I had a Ford Fusion hybrid prior to this vehicle, which I put a few hundred thousand kilometres on around Parry Sound–Muskoka.

I did ask the library, because I wasn't familiar with any electric or hybrid vehicles, which ones might be made in Ontario, seeing as we have a really important auto sector, in case the government members aren't aware of that. There's a few thousand jobs. Which ones are made in Ontario?

Well, I did find one. I'm sure it's a beautiful vehicle. I'm not slamming the vehicle at all; I bet it's a beautiful vehicle. The Lexus RX450h is made in Ontario, I think near Cambridge, starting at \$68,950, probably about \$80,000 when you get it nicely equipped. I'm sure it's an absolutely beautiful vehicle. I just don't know how many of my constituents in Parry Sound–Muskoka are going to be able to afford that, even with the \$15,000 subsidy that you want to hand out.

The approach the government is taking—it's so complicated. I had a citizens' group come to me in the last year—I think it was called the Citizens' Climate Lobby—and I sat down with them. I was trying to understand the cap-and-trade system a bit. So I'm asking them questions about cap-and-trade. In the end, they said that what they would like to see is carbon pricing, an amount per tonne that could go up over time, and carbon pricing that is completely revenue-neutral so it doesn't hurt the economy.

That is an approach that has been taken by BC since 2009, I believe, and it hasn't hurt the economy. The economy has still grown. It has worked, and it's simple and it's transparent. This approach the government has come up with is so complicated, it's so open to manipulation and it's so open to fraud. And in other jurisdictions where we've had it, it hasn't worked. So that is the approach this government has come up with. It's just not a great approach.

So this citizens' lobby group wanted to have revenue-neutral carbon pricing, and what they were asking for was an actual cheque to go back to every citizen, so that a citizen would realize, "Okay, we're having to pay a bit more for whatever—for gas for my car—but I see I got this cheque back at the end of the year that is the refund." So whatever the government collects gets fully refunded to the citizens of the province. That achieves two things: The people recognize that it's not just a tax, and it doesn't hurt the economy. Very importantly, it doesn't hurt the economy. I think BC has shown that.



That's the approach the PC Party wants to bring in, slightly different—not necessarily a cheque coming back—and details still to come. But revenue-neutral is absolutely critical so that—in BC I know that for rural areas that absolutely depend on automobiles and where there's no other choice, they do have some sort of rebate for people in rural areas. They have corporate and personal income tax reductions so that every dime collected in the new tax is refunded to people and doesn't hurt the economy.

In this government's case, it's a brand new tax—billions and billions of dollars—and then they're going to come up with all these crazy schemes of how they're going to spend your money. I mean, they're talking about getting into retrofitting buildings. That's really, really expensive, to retrofit buildings. I happened to replace the windows in my home last year. I guess I was a year too early to do it because maybe, if you do it next year, you're going to get some subsidy that the government decides upon. Some people are going to get it; some people are not going to get it. It's all part of the social engineering that this government has come up with.

We just need to look, though, at their track record when they go and come up with these various schemes, their record of management, which has not been good. One of the other ideas they've come up with is electric charging stations for vehicles that, I guess, are going to be paid for out of the new tax, except that they couldn't find anybody in Ontario to build these electric charging stations, so we're going to hire Quebec Hydro to put in these electric charging stations. Now, there's a good idea: We'll send all this newly collected money to Quebec. That's a really bright idea.

Also, we're part of the Western Climate Initiative, and California has been doing this for a few years more than we have. So what's going to happen—an independent report came out last week—is that in Ontario we're going to have to spend money and send it to California. The estimate from the report that came out, I believe, was over \$300 million in the near future, rising to billions of dollars in a few years—so billions of dollars. I don't know; I guess I'd ask the government: Is that US dollars or Canadian dollars? We're going to be sending the money to California so they can make emission reductions or improve their situation, instead of spending the money here in Ontario, as is the PC plan: to keep all the money, not hurt the economy, spend the money in Ontario and not leave it up to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to come up with some crazy schemes that he tends to come up with.

I'm sure the natural gas industry sector in Ontario will be putting out some statements about what they think about your social engineering as you try to get people off of natural gas.

1440

I actually think it makes a lot of sense to switch vehicles that run on normal gas to propane and natural gas. I owned a truck once that I converted to propane—again, to save money, but also it's much cleaner than normal, regular automobile gas. But this government

seems to have decided that natural gas is bad now—I'm not quite sure why—and they think, according to their report, that ethanol and biodiesel are better than natural gas or propane. I'm not sure whether that's in fact correct.

As the critic for the north, one of the things they talk about is more public transit. Well, what has this government done in the north? They shut down the only passenger rail service that we have in northern Ontario. They shut down the passenger rail service that went right through my riding. I would say it wasn't being used that much, but I think it was more a sign of how badly the government was running it in that they weren't providing good service. They shut down the only public transit we have in northern Ontario, and now they've lessened the amount of bus service in northern Ontario.

I'm not exactly sure how you're supposed to get around in the north other than with an automobile, and at this stage in time, I don't think you'd make it on a pure electric vehicle. I'm just not quite sure whether the government has really thought through this at all.

When I was in Timmins this past week, another thing that came up—we had a round table with the chamber of commerce, and they brought up cap-and-trade, very concerned with the uncertainty and how little businesses in this province really know about it. As I mentioned already, I talked to a large gold company. They're talking to deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers, and they can't get answers from them—huge gold companies.

The chamber of commerce just this week said, "Please delay it for a year so you get it right, or have a better chance of getting it right." I would say, based on this government's track record, the idea of them actually getting it right is maybe dreaming. I kind of hope this is one of the government's stretch goals and that they aren't really going to do this plan, because it's so ripe for problems going forward.

I just want to close with the article in today's paper, in the *Globe and Mail*, where it talks about the social engineering: "The Ontario government will spend more than \$7 billion over four years on a sweeping climate change plan that will affect every aspect of life—from what people drive to how they heat their homes and workplaces—in a bid to slash the province's carbon footprint.

"Ontario will begin phasing out natural gas for heating, provide incentives to retrofit buildings and give rebates to drivers who buy electric vehicles. It will also require that gasoline sold in the province contain less carbon." They're going to switch everybody to geo-thermal systems.

I'm running out of time here, Mr. Speaker, but I would really like to know, for the many residents in my riding, as they go to new rules, switching everybody to pure electric—and I can say that in my riding, most people are trying to figure out how to get off electric because it's so expensive. I've been asked this by constituents recently: Are they going to ban wood stoves in the province of Ontario? Because in my riding, so many people—in fact, I heat my house with wood. I just finished cutting next



year's wood supply, as a matter of fact. Probably 50% of the population in rural Parry Sound–Muskoka heats their homes with wood, so I would like to know from the government: Is that part of their plan? Are they planning on banning heating with wood as well as with natural gas?

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to speak.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thanks to the speaker from Muskoka—

**Interjection:** Parry Sound.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Parry Sound. Thank you very much.

He talked about many things. He talked about the track record of this government, and that is something on the forefront of people's minds every day. He talked about the crazy schemes this government has come up with. One of them we've been sounding alarm bells on is selling off Hydro One. That is one of their more current schemes that is on people's minds today.

We don't understand why they would sell, without a mandate from the people, a public asset that we can show actually generates income.

He talks about electric cars, how there's only one being made in Ontario and how expensive that electric car is, and that the rebate the government would offer is still going to make that car unaffordable to many Ontarians.

That brings me to the point, Speaker, that when this bill was introduced—as New Democrats, we want assurances that this cap-and-trade system won't increase inequality and disproportionately burden low-income Ontarians who pay a far greater share of their incomes in fuel costs and gasoline, specifically in the north. We have northern members here who, time and time again, have debated that issue. The cost of energy and the cost of transportation in the north is disproportionate to other areas of Ontario. If we don't pay attention to the cap-and-trade, to this climate change bill and how that is going to adversely affect the cost of living for people in the north, it is a disservice to those constituents who are represented in this House.

I want to make sure that when this bill gets passed, there is a fair, effective and transparent way of dealing with people who have those higher costs, who have a burden paying for those services.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Before I call for more questions and comments, I'm very pleased to welcome a former member to this chamber, Jean-Marc Lalonde, the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, whom we remember fondly from the 37th, 38th, and 39th Parliaments. Welcome, Jean-Marc.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** And hockey coach.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** And hockey coach, too, yes.

Questions and comments.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Once again I'm delighted to have an opportunity to stand and comment on another member's comments on Bill 172.

I want to start by thanking the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka. He talked about owning hybrid vehicles. I think that's fantastic, because the member is showing with his pocketbook and with his actions that he has got at least one foot on the right side of this issue. I appreciate that very much, because if others in the north were to follow his example and more people were buying the hybrid vehicles, then there would be a greater incentive for more hybrid vehicles to be built in Ontario—and mark my words, it's coming.

But secondly, Speaker, we talked a lot about the implications that he suggests on jobs and the economy. Let's not forget that it's anticipated that the movement to a carbonless economy is in the \$7-trillion range. You can be a denier and take yourself out of this marketplace—when you think that in the technology economy, an upwards of about \$2-trillion economy—we are at the forefront in Ontario of taking a leadership role in the carbonless economy, and we're going to embrace that fully going forward.

We talked also about issues like biodiesel. Why is biodiesel better than natural gas? Understand that biodiesel can be made from renewable resources. You can take waste products, such as waste vegetable oil from restaurants, and turn it into a propulsion fuel, rather than letting it go into a landfill where it will create methane and create carbon dioxide.

I know this, Speaker, because I've said before in the House how my own car was an old Mercedes 300D that ran on vegetable oil from my restaurant. It allowed me to avoid having to use fossil fuel, a non-renewable resource.

Let's also be clear: By joining the Western Climate Initiative, we are sharing the economy across North America. We're not protectionist, as the member would want us to be, only allowing Ontario to spend money in Ontario on Ontario companies. We have a shared economy that doesn't know borders, and that's the way we need to be in the future.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's always a privilege to get up and discuss the comments from the member from Parry Sound because he certainly gets it right and he brings up some of the gigantic holes in this government's policy.

What we really need to look at is an integrated plan that is realistic. He talks about how they jumped on the leading edge of the green energy plan. What does that cost us? We see that the party opposite is all over the place. Some of them are talking about getting on to electricity to heat their homes; others are being a little more realistic and saying that there are people who weren't able to get off electricity because of the cost. That cost is all about getting on to something before the sciences allowed you to make the conversion in a practical and sensible way.

1450

Getting into electric vehicles before the science gets there just means that either you won't be driving or getting around the province—and maybe the member from Beaches–East York doesn't realize this, but there



are no transit systems in the north and rural Ontario. We're lucky enough to get any money from this government to put roads in, which we don't—because there's no gas tax that goes back to help these rural municipalities if they don't have a transit system.

And again, integrated plans—on one hand, they're cancelling transit systems; on the other hand, they're talking about how they'll be able to enhance them with all this money they're taking.

Time after time, everything we hear from this government is conflicting. On one hand, we hear the government saying they've talked to the financial officer—except the Financial Accountability Officer comes back and says, "They never talked to me, and I don't agree with their plan."

We're not allowed to use the word "misleading" here, but that's really what this is about.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** No, you're not, and you're not allowed to imply. I'm going to have to ask you to withdraw.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I withdraw. But I'm not sure how we can get across when actually—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** You're out of time, too. Sorry.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always a good opportunity to stand in this House. Today we're responding to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka on his comments on Bill 172. I listened intently to his remarks. I appreciated that his remarks weren't just written speaking notes. He actually talked about the people of northern Ontario, people I can relate to. A couple of his remarks really struck me.

We were having a conversation just before, and he had said how he had driven through my riding. Well, I drive through his riding on a weekly basis to get here. I used to be able to take the train, which was much more environmentally friendly. Guess what? This government cancelled the train. We used to be able to take a bus. The bus would stop in North Bay, and you'd have about 15 or 20 minutes to catch the bus to go to Toronto. Now you stop in North Bay at 2 o'clock in the morning, and you have to wait for a couple of hours, in the middle of winter, to catch the next bus. So they may as well have cancelled that, too. I'm fairly young, in the grand scheme of things, but I have seniors who have to go to medical appointments and, effectively, they can't use that bus in the middle of winter, in a cold bus station.

So there are two examples of how the government talks about, "Oh, we've got this big fund," but that big fund always seems to dry up when you come to the meat-and-potatoes things that impact people in northern Ontario.

Another example is that the first \$100 million that was announced was to retrofit homes and stuff, but it was going to be administered by Enbridge and Union Gas. Now we find out that they don't really like Enbridge and Union Gas. Very few people in northern Ontario and rural Ontario heat with natural gas, so that fund was not available to them.

Again, what people see and what this government says don't match.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments, so the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka can reply.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'd like to thank the members from London–Fanshawe, Beaches–East York, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Timiskaming–Cochrane for their comments.

I had hoped, in my time, to be able to talk a bit about the forestry sector, other than talking about wood heat. I just wanted to say how important the forestry sector is to the environment in Ontario and get this one statement on the record: "In the long term, a sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained" climate change "mitigation benefit." That was from IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007.

In northern Ontario, we have a huge forestry sector. I just hope this government recognizes how important that forestry sector is and that we need it to be healthy.

Interestingly enough, last week when I was up in Timmins and talking to one of the gold mines, they actually had a huge block of forest that they manage, and they're also hoping that that forest is taken into consideration when it comes to their cap-and-spend calculations.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to get on the record that the forestry sector is very important for the province of Ontario, and I hope it's taken into consideration in the considerations for this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** It is an honour for me to rise today to offer some thoughts on Bill 172, the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act on behalf of the people who I represent in London West.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, managing risks and adapting to climate change, and easing the transition to a low-carbon economy: These are, without question, some of the most important public policy questions that we debate as a Legislature here in this province, but they are critically important for the country and for all nations across the globe.

The consequences of not taking action on climate change are being felt, however, not just at the provincial, national, and global levels but also very directly, at the community level.

In my riding, in my community of London, there are a myriad of organizations that have formed to work on climate change. There are around 40 organizations that recently came together as the London Environmental Network. That network was created about a year ago. Almost half of the organizations involved in the network are involved in climate change issues. These range from climate action organizations like Citizens' Climate Lobby Canada London Group; Transition London On-



tario and Post-Carbon London, to renewable energy organizations like Green Energy London and London District Renewable Energy Co-Operative, and sustainable transportation organizations like London Cycle Link and London Electric Vehicle Association.

Municipal governments in London and across the province are taking steps to prepare for the impact of climate change. Citizens recognize that this is a high priority, and municipal governments are equally concerned.

In London, city staff worked with Western University researchers in 2011 to conduct a major study on the vulnerability of municipal infrastructure to climate change. That report, that came out five years ago, concluded that the city of London can expect to experience more frequent and severe precipitation events in the future, which will seriously impact various public infrastructure.

Just in the last two years, in London, we've seen several major floods that are not only putting pressure on public facilities, but are also dumping raw sewage into the Thames River. In June of last year, a massive one-day rainfall overwhelmed London's pollution control plants, leading to the dumping of almost 109,000 cubic metres of partially treated sewage into the river. Already, in the first three months of 2016, London has dumped almost 60,000 cubic metres of raw sewage and 91,000 cubic metres of partially treated sewage into the river, which is enough to fill about 60 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

The leakage of this waste into the river system has contributed to the explosive growth of algae blooms in Lake Erie, which is where the Thames River ultimately flows. It has created dead zones in the lake. It has killed fish and plant life. It's releasing toxins into the water supply, which my community and many other communities around the Great Lakes rely on, and is causing disruption to the entire ecosystem.

In 2014, the Middlesex London Health Unit conducted a study on the health effects of climate change at the local level, and the report that was released by the health unit was the first of its kind in Canada in terms of its focus on local impacts and on the health risks associated with climate change for London residents. Some of those risks that they identified included more smog-related diseases, increased heat-stress-related morbidity, and more rapid spread of vector-borne illnesses like West Nile virus and Lyme disease.

**1500**

In that report, the health unit also made a number of recommendations for the development of a climate change and health action plan, for extensive education and outreach throughout the community, for evaluation of existing adaptations that are designed to protect Londoners from climate-related hazards, for continued surveillance and monitoring of climate-sensitive diseases, for a greater understanding of the differences between urban and rural areas of our community in terms of the impact of climate change and, finally, to deal with the huge uncertainty that we all feel about what is going to happen and how to deal with this uncertainty by de-

veloping strategies and policies and programs that address multiple risks concurrently.

The adverse weather events that we have experienced in London—these floods not just in London, obviously, but across the province; the out-of-control wildfires that we have seen in northern Ontario and Alberta; the extreme heat waves—are not acts of God, Speaker. These are the direct result of human activity that has led to climate change. The reason we are having this debate before us today about this legislation is a recognition of the significant environmental, economic and political costs associated with climate change and the potentially devastating consequences if we don't take action.

That's why New Democrats have been so invested in this legislation that's before us today and why we have been so strong in our support for an effective cap-and-trade system. That's why my colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth, who I know is held in great esteem by members across the way, devoted so much effort to introducing amendments to improve this bill. New Democrats appreciate that some of the amendments that were brought forward by my colleague have been incorporated into Bill 172, and certainly that is a departure from what typically happens at committee, when all the amendments that are brought forward by the NDP are voted down. However, even the few amendments that the government accepted have not gone far enough in ensuring that this bill is going to do what we need it to do.

There is an urgency to take action. Climate change is real and the stakes of not taking the right action are high. We have already seen how the government's failure to listen to expert advice and to implement effective environmental actions has contributed to public cynicism and has undermined public commitment to advance environmental initiatives. We can't afford another green energy debacle that tainted the public's view of a green economy.

We need to get the most extensive buy-in possible. We need to engage all Ontarians in supporting and recognizing the need to take climate action. That's why New Democrats have been so insistent that the cap-and-trade system that is being put in place by this bill must be fair, it must be effective and it must be transparent. These are the same three principles that we talked about during second reading debate, these are the same three principles that underlie all of the amendments that were brought forward during the committee, and they are the same three principles that we still feel are lacking in this bill.

By "fairness," we mean legislation that will unite Ontarians, as I said before, behind a climate change initiative, rather than divide them. Certainly, when there is a feeling that some people are being asked to do more than their fair share and others are getting a free ride—when that kind of a feeling is in place—that can be very divisive. We have argued throughout the debate on this legislation that the cap-and-trade system must not place a disproportionate burden on low-income Ontarians, because that is not fair. Low-income Ontarians pay a much greater proportion of their income on home heating, on gas for their vehicles than the rest of us.



We have heard from this side of the House—from my colleague the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane and my colleague the member for Nickel Belt—about the unique realities of people who live in northern communities across this province, whether they are low-income or not. They have very few options available to help them reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. We've heard about the lack of public transit, the lack of train service from northern Ontario down to Toronto. Northern Ontarians don't have access to transit. They don't have any other choice but to use their cars to get around. This makes it very difficult for them to reduce carbon emissions, and they are going to end up carrying a disproportionate burden of the cost of a cap-and-trade system.

The same thing, closer to home for me in my community, goes for renters in apartment buildings. London West has a number of apartment buildings. The tenants, in many cases, don't control their own thermostat. They don't have the ability to reduce the amount of heat that they use. They don't have the ability to bring in energy efficiency retrofits. People like tenants, who tend to be low-income, will be disproportionately affected by this cap-and-trade system.

We urged, throughout the committee, that Ontario look at some of what is being done in other jurisdictions, which really is the norm for the implementation of a cap-and-trade system. BC provides a special rebate for low-income families. California requires that 25% of cap-and-trade revenues must be spent on programs that benefit disadvantaged communities. Alberta's new carbon tax plan includes a consumer rebate which will offset the impact of carbon pricing on low-income households. Throughout the consultation on this bill, as it was being drafted, throughout the public input that came forward during public input, a number of organizations reinforced this point: The burden has to be shared fairly, and low-income Ontarians should not be penalized by the way that the cap-and-trade system is designed.

During clause-by-clause, I know my colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth introduced a series of amendments to do exactly that: to make the system more fair and to spread the burden more evenly. He moved that financial and investment assistance be made available to low- and middle-income residents. That amendment failed. He moved that the bill be amended to allow the provision of rebates or tax credits for low- and middle-income households. That amendment failed. He moved that the minister should identify communities that have a disproportionate burden. That amendment failed.

Finally, he was successful. He secured agreement from the government that the only wording that they would support is that the climate action plan “consider the impact of the regulatory scheme on low-income households and must include actions to assist those households with Ontario's transition to a low-carbon economy.” Certainly, that is a baby step forward. We would have liked to have seen stronger action, but it does address that issue of fairness that is so critical for New Democrats.

Another aspect of fairness concerns the support to enable workers who are engaged in high-carbon industries to transition away and move to other work. Again, my colleague had moved an amendment that there be assistance provided to people working in high-carbon industries to make a just transition, where their livelihoods are affected. Once again, that amendment was not supported.

1510

I want to talk a little bit about transparency, which is the second key principle, which is also, in our view, somewhat lacking in this bill. The government says that the \$1.9 million that's generated through cap-and-trade revenues will be dedicated to climate action; however, the greenhouse gas reduction account is not a separate, special-purpose account at all. It is actually an accounting procedure that allows the government to spend the money on anything it wants, including—potentially—deficit reduction. There's no guarantee that new cap-and-trade revenues will increase funding for climate change action, no commitment to record the inflows and outflows of money.

During the input on this bill, New Democrats listened. My colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth listened carefully to what the Financial Accountability Officer had to say about this bill. The FAO felt that it would be useful if the minister's review and evaluation that is provided for in the bill is structured in a way to maximize accessibility to the Financial Accountability Officer under the Financial Accountability Officer Act. For that reason, the NDP introduced multiple amendments to strengthen the cap-and-trade bill to include all of the FAO's recommendations to increase the transparency and accountability of the cap-and-trade system.

Unfortunately, again, Liberal members voted against these amendments. Not only that, but they claimed that the FAO's concerns had been incorporated into their bill. The FAO later said that he had been misrepresented in the way that his recommendations had been framed by the Liberal Party. He said, “In claiming that the reporting requirement was ‘what [I was] looking for,’ the member misrepresented my opinion and level of participation in the development of amendments to the bill. Furthermore, the member did not ask me whether the requirement was consistent with my recommendations.”

There are a number of other concerns about this bill related to transparency, and that is the lack of accountability over the programs that are going to be funded by the program fund that is created. We know that a number of people, including former Liberal finance minister Greg Sorbara, have raised concerns about the accountability and oversight over the dollars that are generated by the cap-and-trade system.

Finally, I want to move to the third principle, and that is effectiveness. Again, the NDP proposed a number of amendments that would have improved the effectiveness of this legislation in actually dealing with climate change. We've seen too many examples in other jurisdictions where carbon pricing initiatives and cap-and-trade pro-



grams have been introduced, and because of the way that they have been implemented, they have not actually succeeded in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Once again, my colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth introduced a number of amendments that would have very much contributed to greater effectiveness for this legislation and would have made the bill much more effective in actually achieving the targets that are stated.

We know that dealing with climate change is important. We know that Ontarians want to see the government take action on this. We also know that they are a little bit jaded about the ability of the government to actually implement what it says it is going to do. So New Democrats will be continuing to monitor this legislation closely. We will be continuing to push for climate actions that are fair, that are transparent and that are effective, because, as I said at the outset, we can't afford to do anything less. Our province cannot afford for us to show any less leadership than that. We must deal with climate change; we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member from London West for her comments. I was in here earlier, as well, when the official opposition was speaking on this bill, Bill 172, the climate change act.

I think it's another example of a piece of legislation that's before us where there is far more commonality than there is something that distinguishes us. I know that the third party and the member from London West just spoke. They obviously support something. I'm not exactly sure where they'll land on this. And we have heard, relatively recently, that the official opposition, the members of the Conservatives and their leader, have come out supporting. I guess it's fair to say, a carbon tax or a carbon pricing mechanism of some kind. We find ourselves in a position where all three parties are acknowledging that there is an issue, acknowledging that there is a problem, and they are somewhat trying to distinguish themselves in terms of what the approach should be. That is as it usually is in this particular Legislature.

I would say that there is a long history, actually, of agreement on this particular file. You can go back to the election of 2003, when all three parties of the day and all three political leaders of the day committed to the closure of all of the coal-fired generating facilities in the province of Ontario. Thirteen years ago, almost, or 14, when party platforms were being prepared, all three political parties and all three leaders of the day had made the same commitment to close coal. We did it. I know the file quite well. Two of the five coal-generating facilities were in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. We've moved forward and done that—the single biggest climate change initiative in North America.

I simply say that as the conversation on Bill 172 unfolds and continues, I would just remind visitors and viewers who are interested in this file that there's probably far more commonality on this issue than some might be led to believe as they follow the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm happy to discuss, for a couple of minutes, Bill 172 and follow the member from London West, my neighbour down in southwestern Ontario.

I have to say, I've been in touch a number of times with my constituency offices today, and people are quite shocked. They consider the government's approach and the things that they're going to be doing to be quite unbelievable. Quite frankly, when I woke up this morning and read the *Globe and Mail*, I had the same reaction that my constituents in Lambton–Kent–Middlesex had to the fact that the government is planning to phase out natural gas for heating, provide incentives to retrofit buildings and give rebates to drivers who buy electric vehicles.

I just think there's a sense of disbelief. My perspective on this issue is that I think we have a government here that is completely out of touch with the way families in this province are trying to deal with day-to-day life and affordability.

There's grave concern, especially in southwestern Ontario, as the member from London West knows. I hope the NDP will advocate for the perspective of the auto industry in the province. We've been decimated in Ontario when it comes to manufacturing. Now we have a government that refuses to allow business and the free market to drive innovation and demand. This is a government and a Premier and a cabinet who are essentially telling the few remaining manufacturers in the auto industry that it's her way, this government's way, or the highway.

This plan is going to take thousands and thousands of dollars from families' pockets and it's going to kill jobs in this province, and I want that to be on the record.

1520

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's once again a pleasure to take a couple of minutes and comment on the comments on Bill 172 from my colleague from London West.

She captured the feeling in her community. A lot of people are mobilizing in her community to fight climate change because people across the province, people across the country, and likely many people across the world are worried about climate change and want to act. She also talked about issues that were happening in her community that could be and should be fixed right away, that aren't actually part of climate change but are just part of common sense.

She also talked about how, in the committee hearings, our critic put forward many amendments to this act, some of which were adopted, some of which were watered down, and some of which, quite frankly, were refused. He did everything he could; our party did everything it could to make this act—

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Stronger.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** —work. Stronger.

The problem with not so much the act is, what happens after? Because we hear some of the radical issues or



radical things this government may or may not do. Quite frankly—and the member from London West talked about her riding; I'll talk about my riding. Quite frankly, some of the stuff that my people heard over the weekend coming from news articles which originated from briefing documents from this government—it scared people. It didn't make them want to help with climate change; it made them want to look for a foxhole. The way to address climate change is to bring people on board and make them work together; it's not to pit people against each other. That's what we saw in these briefing notes that came out this weekend.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? The member for Etobicoke North.

**M. Shafiq Qaadri:** Merci, monsieur le Président. Avec votre permission, premièrement, je voudrais accueillir et souhaiter la bienvenue à notre ancien député à l'Assemblée législative de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, le très honorable Jean-Marc Lalonde. Bienvenue, notre ami.

I would first of all like to commend my honourable colleagues from the NDP not only for their active participation in the environmental sensitivity and sensibility initiatives and programs that we've had and are bringing forth here, but also for the fact that these are long-held views.

I would also like to congratulate the recently acquired interest by the Progressive Conservative Party, which is, I think, still struggling in a somewhat embryological form there—their support of greenhouse gas emission reduction. They're late to the environmental table, but, as they say, better late than never, and thank goodness the polls don't lie.

In any case, I would say that this entire initiative of greenhouse gas emissions has, of course, multiple effects, whether it's economic, social or political. With your permission, I will speak for a moment about the medical aspects.

We know and we can see by the clear examples, if you travel to other parts of the world, Beijing, Mumbai, Delhi, Karachi, Pakistan, and many, many other jurisdictions that do not take the reduction of greenhouse gas, particulate matter or carbon emissions seriously. This has a long-term, chronic, ongoing, devastating effect, not only for ordinary problems or simply-dealt-with problems like asthma or chronic obstructive lung disease, but of course for the downstream incidence, prevalence, of much nastier conditions, whether it's cancers—particularly, of course, lung cancer, but other cancers as well.

We need to pass this low-carbon emission bill as soon as possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments for this round. I now return to the member for London West for her reply.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I wanted to express appreciation to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane and the member for Etobicoke North for offering some thoughts on my speech.

In particular, I wanted to pick up on what the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane said, my colleague in the NDP. He asked the right question. As is typical with much of the legislation that we see being passed by this government, for Ontarians, it's what happens after the act is passed. It's the implementation of the act that is most critical.

He points out that the most important thing, the thing that we cannot screw up on, is to bring people on board, to make everybody feel like they have a part in this climate action and that no one will be unfairly disadvantaged by the plans that the government is bringing forward.

The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex is right: We share constituents in southwestern Ontario. He is also quite right that there is a sense that this government is out of touch, that they have really dropped the ball on the energy file. There is no confidence that the government is going to be able to move forward in the way that we must on the climate change initiative. There is really a sense of disbelief that the government will be able to achieve what it sets out to do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri):** I thank the honourable member from London West. I call now for further debate. Further debate? The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, you have the floor now.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to start off by saying—and I think you might have said it when you weren't in the chair—that this newfound interest in the environment I think is a little bit misleading for some people. Former Premier Bill Davis was one of the greatest environmentalists—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri):** I respectfully interrupt the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I'm sure you're aware of that vocabulary, and I'd respectfully ask you to withdraw.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'll withdraw. My apologies, Speaker. You might have said something that I disagree with.

Former Premier Bill Davis, I think, brought in a lot of great environmental programs across this province. What we want to do today is set the tone. We actually agree that there are some climate concerns. Our new leader, Patrick Brown, has said that unequivocally. We just want to make sure we address the concern in a pragmatic way that will actually make a difference.

There's no time for this debate to be about social engineering, to be about photo op environmentalism. We need to do things that are going to make a true difference. Our leader has suggested that what we want to see is a revenue-neutral program so that we have the funds going towards the environment and we can ensure that.

We want to have balance between the environment and the economy. I'm not certain how the party opposite continually suggests that there is only one issue here, that the environment is the only thing that people are thinking about. People who don't have jobs, in my riding at least, talk to me a lot about not having jobs. How do they afford things for their kids? How do they afford



education? How do they afford to take care of their aging and elderly parents who have a lot of problems if they don't have jobs? They're already struggling with the enormous energy bills under the leadership of this government.

At the end of the day, I think what we want to talk about in this debate is how we can do it better than Bill 172.

I'm going to talk, at the start of my speech here today, about the area that I think we need to be talking about in great detail. Climate change is one of the most important issues facing our province and the world, but one of the members opposite earlier said that they were going to solve the world's climate problems with this bill. It might help a little, and certainly we want to be doing our part, but I think it's a little overextension to suggest that Bill 172 is going to solve the world's climate change concerns. So I'm going to put that on the record.

We certainly support investment in transit. We support energy conservation and nuclear. Close to my backyard, Bruce Power signed a milestone agreement with the Independent Electricity System Operator that will create 23,000 jobs, secure the production of 6,300 megawatts of energy, and baseload energy at that—we're not talking about an intermittent source of power; that's baseload energy—and generate \$6.3 billion in annual economic benefits. I want to reiterate that that is emissions-free, clean, green, baseload power that this province depends on. Otherwise, we're in real challenges.

We need to continue to go down that path and make sure that we're providing affordable energy and clean power.

1530

My riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound saw its own share of the wrath of climate change when brutally cold weather froze water pipes in Owen Sound a year or so ago. The unprecedented event—317 frozen services and 50 water main breaks—cost the city \$2.1 million to remedy. The city had to replace about 1.4 kilometres of water mains because of breaks. This crisis emptied out the reserve fund for the city that they had built up over 10 years, so now they're in dire consequences. They did apply to the Liberal government for some emergency management funding, and sadly, that was denied. No assistance was given for that.

What happened in Owen Sound paints a bigger picture. According to the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association, which I met with this morning—there's a reception here later this afternoon that all the members can go to and be updated on what's going on. They share with me that the infrastructure deficit is between \$20 billion and \$40 billion. Its impact is felt through water main breaks and, most importantly, in a threat to public health and safety.

In our conversation I talked about how it would be great to be seeing some money go into this that is preventative and is going to create jobs and help our economy, rather than a lot of blunder about what may happen or may not happen and the money that may get spent here.

The environment minister, when challenged by my colleague from Huron–Bruce, Lisa Thompson, really doesn't ever come out and say what the cost is going to be. Again, it's "Just believe us. Just trust us that we know better than you, and at the end of the day it'll all work out okay."

Well, at the end of the day, we've gone through that with the Green Energy Act. A whole lot of things in that Green Energy Act didn't come through as they were purported to when they rolled it out—against the wishes of democracy, by the way. They took away all of the rights of municipalities to be able to vote whether they want them or don't want them in their backyard—I'm referring to wind turbines. So Mr. Speaker, if we're a little sceptical, you will hopefully appreciate that a little bit.

Most of our water system was built in the 1950s, with some dating back to the 1870s. If we invested \$1 billion in that industry alone, we would create up to 47,000 jobs. Consider that in comparison to the \$700 million we lose to leaky pipes and the cost of energy and the resources dealing with those types of breaks. Underinvestment has major implications on our environment, economy and health.

The government needs to develop a credible plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also protect taxpayers and the economy. That balance is so integral that we have to do it. It isn't one or the other. It isn't trying to put out spin and suggesting that if you don't vote for this bill you're a bad person, you don't care about the world, you don't care about our economy, you don't care about climate and you don't care about those pages sitting in front of you. No, it's a case, again, of needing to do this credibly. We need to understand: If they're going to do this, what is the impact going to be? Is that money that they're going to collect actually going to go to impacting the environment and the climate in a positive way, or is it going into a slush fund, as many people have challenged and questioned the government on?

Cap-and-trade is a new tax on your energy bills and it's going to add taxes to virtually every consumable you can think of out there. One of my constituents came up to me just recently when talking about this and said, "The government can spin this, the Liberals can spin this, however they want, but any money from me as a taxpayer is a tax. You can call it a revenue tool. You can call it anything you want, but if it's coming out of my back pocket to go to the government coffers, it's a tax."

He was very concerned, at the end of the day, about what this tax is actually going to do: "What is it going to do for me as a taxpayer and a constituent and a resident of this great province of Ontario? Can you guarantee me that every single dollar is actually going to be put towards action that will improve our climate?" Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't say yes to that because at the end of the day I don't believe that that fund is going to be set up or that it's going to be accountable. Part of that is my five-year track record here of this Liberal government, which has collected a lot of money—they've had record



revenues—and yet they still incur more debt than they ever have in our history.

Families have already faced hikes between \$1,000 and \$1,400 per year. Some 60 households in my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound alone had their hydro shut off in the fall of 2014. Small manufacturers are going to be hit with \$170,000 in new energy costs. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce estimates the hikes will shut down one in 20 manufacturers.

Another study by the major power consumers of Ontario also raised concerns over the fact that we're paying the highest energy rates in North America. That's indisputable, Mr. Speaker. This isn't something we're making up. This isn't just opposition. This is just an actual fact of reality. I hear this every day: small business, large business, people thinking of getting into business—

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Going out of business.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Going out of business, sadly, too often, my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry tells me. I think he hears this fairly regularly, sadly, as do most of the people in this House. I think even if the Liberals were honest, they would admit to that as well.

The other one that I keep bringing up in this House when we're talking about energy is our schools and hospitals. They will have tough decisions to continue to make when the rates go up yet again. People don't always connect the dots. If those energy rates are doubling and tripling, that is a fixed cost to those institutions. At the end of the day, they have very few pots that they can actually cut. So it comes back down, typically, to nurses in a lot of cases but also front-line staff and a lot of the great people who are in the support mechanism of a hospital or a school that face those cuts.

Just think about it, Mr. Speaker: If an average school board pays about \$4 million a year in hydro rates, then this will add another \$1 million to that expense. Again, where do they find that \$1 million? Typically at the front line. Sadly, in my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, that represents—and I'm going to talk about this in a little bit—the actual education assistants. We have already lost 78, which were eliminated in the last year. You can't tell me, Mr. Speaker, that there are less students with special needs the day after they made this decision than the day before. At the end of the day, they're making choices. That's the government putting a school board into a bit of a box, saying, "We're giving you no more money."

But people aren't, as I said earlier, connecting the dots: that it's because of these increasing energy rates. Again, they've quadrupled in the last number of years, and we're predicting—or they're telling us from across the aisle that these are going to actually at least double again in the next four years. So we're back to looking at what those impacts are.

The same in health care: We're cutting nurses, we're cutting front-line care workers, because that operating budget has to be balanced. In legislation, a hospital cannot run a deficit, so they've got to start looking and

saying, "Where are we going to do this to balance our budget?" It's typically, sadly, the front-line care which impacts people the most across the board. At a time when this government is closing hospital beds, cutting seniors' medication and slashing funding for doctors, more hikes, particularly energy hikes, would seriously undermine patient care and front-line care as well.

Right now, everyone is concerned that the Liberals are getting this wrong. I don't see a lot of organizations coming up and saying, "Bill, this is a wonderful thing. You should be supportive." I certainly don't have the chamber of commerce; I don't have the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I don't have those people who are, again, looking out for the long term and the benefit of all consumers, all taxpayers and all constituents that this is a great thing.

Minister Murray, in my mind, and what I hear from my constituents, is misguided. He has bought into this and he's going to sell it, regardless of what anybody says—what rationale we can bring, what groups bring, what experts bring. He has got his mindset, and that's going to be his legacy, come hell or high water, good or bad for the benefit of the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Who leaked it to the media?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'm going to get to the leaks in a minute—absolutely.

Is he ready for \$2-per-litre gasoline and another \$1,500 electricity bill hike? How about those less fortunate than him? Most importantly, are they ready? Are they going to actually be able to manage these situations?

He wants buildings to switch off natural gas and go electric, solar or geothermal, and intermittent solar and wind. Where is this going to come from? It's just going to naturally appear.

Requiring all homes to undergo an energy audit before they are sold and convince all people, including farmers, to drive an electric or hybrid car by 2024: I'm not certain that currently those cars and vehicles are being produced in Ontario. I think my colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka eloquated quite well that they're not being produced, and, equally important, where is the infrastructure to support this?

Our farmers run a huge business. They are the backbone of our economy. They're the backbone of most things, because if we don't have good, healthy food, there's not much we're going to be able to do. And yet we don't just have a charging station down every back road or concession. These farmers can't be taking time to drive 30 and 40 miles if the infrastructure was even there. So it bewilders me a bit how he's going to, almost overnight, change our whole system without the realities and the practicality of making it happen.

He's also including school buses—making school buses electric. Again, great theme, but what's the practicality? What's the reality of truly supporting this?

There are some sensible solutions to work with, such as building regional rail networks and cycling infrastructure, including curb-separated bike lanes.



There's an undeniable financial burden of the cap-and-trade scheme. It's not just the Ontario public, the industry associations and experts who are worried the minister is in way over his head. Some of those in his party and in cabinet, including even past ministers, believe and have said that he's going too far. My colleague from Elgin-Middlesex suggested that we—what's Monte's riding?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

1540

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Thank you. He's suggesting about these leaks. This morning, there was a leak from cabinet ministers in their own caucus saying, "We don't agree. This is not where we need to go. This isn't something we can support."

I credit whoever the people were who put that leak out to actually step up and tell them that you're not going down that road. There's always time to pull back. The member from Sudbury, earlier in his comments today, talked about hitting a wall and why you don't veer off, why you don't hold back before you hit the wall. I would like to suggest that hopefully, at least, there is someone over there showing a glimmer of hope, because we've been saying that for four years when it comes to the big debt hole that they keep screaming towards and yet continue to overspend every year and add to that debt burden.

Minister Murray is accused of shunning his ministry partners, such as energy minister Bob Chiarelli and economic development minister Brad Duguid. He is also accused of ignoring their advice. We can't get into this where it's the ideology of one person driving something and saying, "Just listen to me because I have the ability and the power," and he's putting more power into this bill. These ministers, of course, would object to Minister Murray's plans to close down the province's nuclear power plants and natural gas and kill more auto industry jobs, for which they are respectively responsible.

I said it here earlier in the House today: Former Liberal finance minister Greg Sorbara said, and I'm going to quote, "There's no evidence anywhere in the world that the cap-and-trade ... actually does work to significantly reduce carbon emissions ... I have to be a little bit skeptical about the whole scheme other than it's going to bring a lot of ... money into the government."

Mr. Speaker, that is their former Liberal finance minister, someone who has served in this House for many, many years. People respect him.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Bring Greg back.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I never thought I might say that, but yes: Bring Greg back.

Even the word "scheme" is in there. When a former Liberal cabinet minister uses the word "scheme," you know that he has valid concerns. This is a \$1.9-billion-a-year slush fund. Five separate OPP investigations—bribery, fraud and the destruction of evidence—yet we're supposed to just believe and trust that they have a scheme that's actually going to save, in their words, the world.

None of us, Mr. Speaker, can get a clear answer on what this plan will cost, yet we know it will send \$3

billion into the California economy by 2030, paid for by Ontario businesses and families. You and I and our families and the people we're given the privilege to serve will be paying that.

It's a bit like Groundhog Day. We followed jurisdictions in Germany and California in the past in regard to the Green Energy Act. I think most people, if they objectively look at what was promised with the Green Energy Act and what it has delivered, would suggest it is not working. It has not worked and it will not work. I would ask: Why would we, again, continue down the path of following California and send \$3 billion annually to their economy as opposed to our economy?

I'm starting to run out of time so I'm going to flip back a little bit to talk a bit more about nuclear. I can't fathom that this Minister of the Environment wants to get rid of the industry that actually produces 60% of baseload power for this great province. It's emissions-free. It's clean. It's green. It's baseload. It's good jobs. It has a huge ripple effect in the manufacturing sector. It drives the economy of our province. It employs 45,600 people; \$2.5 billion is the amount the nuclear industry generates in direct and secondary economic activity in Ontario every year.

In 2016, this government, the Liberal government, actually announced that they were going to refurbish the existing fleet of nuclear reactors at both Darlington and Bruce Power. Yet the environment minister comes out and says that within 10 years he sees it gone. Maybe that was just him, not talking to his colleagues, not following scripted notes, but that raises big doubts for everybody. How can a government go down a path and say, "We've committed to this," but then the environment minister comes out and speaks? There's either something going on behind the scenes we don't know about, or he needs to step up clean and put it in black and white that unequivocally our nuclear industry will move forward.

He's also talked—interesting, the same environment minister—about getting rid of natural gas. There's a lot of work going on in three municipalities, Huron-Kinloss, the municipality of Kincardine and, closer to my heart, Arran-Elderslie, that do not have natural gas now. A lot of agricultural communities, the big grain dryers, they've been working extremely hard. In fact, they've signed an agreement with a company to bring natural gas, which is going to give them parity, the ability to compete equally with the rest of Ontario, and the rest of the country, frankly.

Now we have an environment minister saying, "No, no, no, we need to get off of natural gas." Most residents that have it, I think if you polled them one-on-one and said, "Do you want to get rid of natural gas to this cap-and-trade scheme?" and give the facts to them, I think it would be an unequivocal, resounding "Absolutely not."

At the end of the day, I'm not certain where this minister gets these ideas. Is he just trying to spin? We cannot afford to do environmentalism photo ops and try to sell our great public a bill of goods. We need to ensure that we know what we're doing and that there are actually viable plans in place.



The minister announced this just a month ago, after he announced the \$100-million green fund to use natural gas to fight climate change. So again, I'm not certain. Minister Murray said, "This investment will help" keep "Ontario on the path toward a low-carbon future." In the last election, they pledged \$200 million to bring natural gas to rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just not certain. Is it yin and yang? Can we not get our stories straight? Is it trying to deflect and defer, or is he just fundamentally, "I am going to do this because I have the power to move forward"? We can't afford that. We've done it with the Green Energy Act and we're all paying big prices for that. No one is denying that we need to be taking action, but it needs to be done in a balanced manner.

Natural gas is a model for the world. Canada's own environmental scientist and esteemed energy thinker, Vaclav Smil, has called it "fuel for the 21st century." Why is this Minister Murray replacing what works with what doesn't? Why does this minister think he knows better than an environmental scientist? Who do the people of Ontario trust, I ask you, Mr. Speaker: Glen Murray, the Minister of the Environment, or an environmental scientist who says we have to have natural gas as part of our mix?

I have tried to suggest in here that we want some balance. We want to know that we actually are doing something that is going to help. We're not going to stand here and tell you we're going to solve climate change for the world when that's not a fact that we can back up—although Minister Murray seems to think so. We're certainly not going to just go out and do environmental opportunism when it's people's lives at stake. The future of our planet needs addressing; so does the future of the people who we are given the privilege to serve. We'll do it in balance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It's always a pleasure to rise. I want to thank my colleague the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. He touched on a whole host of issues. It speaks to the complexity of this bill as it relates to the enormity of its implications and effects it will have on everyday people, whether it be the status of our economy and our economic prosperity, whether it be health ramifications or whether it be the pressures on municipalities to keep up with infrastructure spending and funding. This is heady stuff and incredibly complex, but it is very much required for us to debate and to consult and to communicate and to be really pensive about how we do it right and how we get it right.

Do I believe as an individual, as an Ontarian and as an elected official that this bill will solve global climate change? Of course not. It is a global problem. We need to act as citizens of the planet. But as a developed country, and one that has built its economy on contributing for generations to greenhouse gas emissions, we have to be cognizant of that and we have to acknowledge that it is our responsibility to do the right thing, to play a role in

setting a standard, setting a precedent, and also supporting those developing countries in their journey towards a low-carbon economy.

It is imperative. We are damned if we don't, and it seems like we're damned if we do, but if we do it right, this could be transformational for our economy and provide prosperity for generations to come. That's what my hope is.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** It's a pleasure to stand on Bill 172 on climate change. I must say to my good friend and colleague across the way from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, for a young athlete like him, I was quite concerned that he was going to run out of breath. But he kept going, and all the more power to him.

As we talk about this, it reminds me of what I've been going through for the last 20 years at home. That's with someone who is light-years ahead of me on this: my good wife, Donna, who has espoused all of these points for two decades now, actually—just a wife who you pay attention to, like we all do. I have to tell you, now that she wants another car, it has to be an electric car. I don't know what I'm going to do, because I love her, but I can't afford to do all of those things at once. So I'll just continue to do my very best.

**1550**

The second-last thing she did was that she talked us into solar. We've done two solar buildings at our place. All you have to do is sign on the dotted line. She convinced me she had a budget and it would work out. Actually, it has worked out very well. She's done very well and she could foresee the future.

I just want to tell you that on such a long-term framework for climate action and a stronger foundation for this cap-and-trade program, we want to ensure the transparency and accountability of Ontario's path toward a low-carbon economy and the use of proceeds to support greenhouse gas reductions. It's long overdue. It has been a long time in the works. Ontario is one of the leaders, with Quebec and California, and now it has gone worldwide. It's there. Get used to it.

Remember, the bill does outline two great, important main issues. One is that emissions reduction targets and action plans are there, and the cap-and-trade program will use the proceeds.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I just want to commend my honourable colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who really understands this issue well. He's heard from his constituents. In fact, he hears the same message that I hear every single day and that I think every MPP in this House hears, regardless of political stripe. It comes down to two things that people are concerned about when they hear news like they do today: The fact that we have a government considering banning natural gas to heat new home construction, and secondly, how they're dramatically going to shift the auto industry in this province.



We have a government who thinks they know what's best for business and consumer choices out there. I happen to believe that the free market decides what products sell.

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound really raised a number of issues that people are concerned about: cost of living and job security in this province. He mentioned specifically the environment minister talking about the nuclear industry and he made it sound like within 10 years, the government was going to wind down the nuclear industry. That's what the Minister of the Environment said in his speech at, I believe, the Economic Club, or wherever he was speaking—the Sierra Club, maybe.

We have different ministers saying different things. One of the issues and comments that the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound raised was: Which cabinet minister leaked this document? There's obviously division within Kathleen Wynne's Liberal cabinet. I think that raises serious issues as well. I'm concerned about the signal that the news that came out today is sending to the business community in the province, whether it's the utilities that are investing in the province or the auto industry. I'll have more to say about that later.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** First of all, I'd like to thank the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. He always does his homework and certainly presents factual information which we can decipher to the good or bad, whichever way we field on our position on this.

There's no doubt that everyone in this province and everyone in this country wants to lower greenhouse gas emissions. We all witness global warming. We all witness the weather patterns that are changing and all the tragedies that have happened: the dryness, the floods, the earth slides and all the things that are going on. Something is definitely changing drastically. As some of the members on the government side have pointed out, especially the member from Etobicoke North, if you travel and go to other countries, you can see the results of some of these tragedies, whether it be earthquakes from fracking or whether it be mudslides or torrential rain or tornadoes. They've doubled their tornadoes in the last 10 years in the Midwest, which is very scary.

But besides the weather trends, I have some problems with the cap-and-trade program in reference to the credits. You get credits, and you can sell your credits, if you don't use them, to other companies. Well, my fear is that if you sell these credits to other companies, they're going to use them as opposed to doing something about reduction themselves. If the credits are cheaper to buy from another company and use rather than doing preventive measures on your own emissions, then I think that's going to be a negative and a drawback. I don't think that has been spelled out in this bill at all, about the creating of credits. I think that will end up being a major problem unless they address it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. We go back to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for his reply.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to thank those members from Essex, Ajax–Pickering, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

I didn't get it on the record earlier that this was actually debated a little bit in general government. There were actually 100 amendments that the Liberals brought to their own bill. To me, frankly, it says that you didn't do your homework if you're bringing in 100 amendments.

They actually rejected every single one of our party's that we brought. We were trying to, again, at least find some practicality in this bill. We wanted some accountability and some tax relief; they aimed for less accountability, less transparency and less tax fairness.

Their cap-and-trade scheme will not effectively tackle climate change, and they can't guarantee it will. That's one of the concerns we have. It's not just optics, Mr. Speaker. We need to be doing things that are going to make it a better life for Ontarians. What we see is that this will actually make life more complicated and less affordable for Ontarians, and increase the cost of doing business in our province across all walks of life.

Ontarians are already being bilked out of billions for hydro. In fact, the Auditor General says we've overpaid for electricity by \$37 billion between 2006 and 2014, and we'll be overcharged by another \$133 billion by 2032.

Our leader, Patrick Brown, has already stated in this House that we're going to send \$3 billion a year to California by the year 2030. Just think of what \$3 billion could do for our health care, for our hospitals and for our education system if it was left here in Ontario.

The member from Sudbury said we're going to hit a wall, and it's a mirage. I would ask him about the debt hole that they continually scream towards and don't veer off or put the brakes on. He said this bill is going to fix the planet. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest to you that this bill may help in some ways, and hopefully there are some ways if they ram it through, but at the end of the day it's not going to fix the planet.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Good afternoon, Speaker. As always, it's a privilege to be called upon as one of the 107 voices in Ontario's provincial Parliament.

This Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas, will enact the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act.

If I may, Speaker, allow me to state right off the top that New Democrats were looking forward to supporting a cap-and-trade approach in the fight against climate change. We wanted a system that would be seen by almost everyone to be fair, effective and transparent. We were optimistic that the Liberal members of the committee on general government would be open-minded. We were hoping they would see fit to listen to valid suggestions. We were expecting them to adopt reasonable amendments which would have made this bill more fair, more effective and more transparent. But, Speaker, I'm reminded of Paul Newman's famous quote from the



movie Cool Hand Luke: "What we've got here is a failure to communicate."

When this bill was discussed at the committee level, New Democrats put forward a number of amendments designed to improve the language of the bill. The Liberal reaction to those NDP amendments has left many of us dispirited, disappointed and disillusioned.

The Liberals have been talking about doing something on the climate change file for the past eight or nine years. They've had five Ministers of the Environment in that time, and we thought we finally had one who knew what he was talking about. We put our faith in that minister. I still have faith in that minister, Mr. Murray, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

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So I am befuddled, absolutely befuddled, as to why our suggestions on ways to make this bill more presentable were ignored by the Liberal members of that committee. How can this bill be seen to be fair, effective and transparent when there's nothing in here that addresses the inequality and disproportionate burden that this bill will have on low-income families? How can this bill be seen as fair, effective and transparent when there's nothing in here to offset the extra costs this bill will have on families in the more remote areas or the northern regions of our huge province? This bill is modelled on legislation already in place in Alberta and British Columbia as well as California. So why didn't the Liberals follow those models and take low-income families into account?

We all know families struggling just to put food on the table. They have to get by financially and they have to use more of their limited incomes to pay for fuel, to put gas in the family car or the family pickup. This bill should have had a provision that a proportion of the cap-and-trade revenues would go for a rebate for those most in need. This is the model adopted in British Columbia. This is the plan that will soon be in place in Alberta. The law in California mandates that at least one quarter—25%—of cap-and-trade auction revenues must be spent on programs that benefit what they term as "disadvantaged communities."

Speaker, this bill will see all of us paying more for our fuel. In our more remote communities, diesel has to be hauled in to run the generators that provide the power. These hardy souls don't have the option of hopping on a subway or taking a GO train. They have no alternatives. They will be disproportionately disadvantaged.

You can't take a cookie-cutter approach to climate change. You have to make exceptions. You must look at the big picture and not penalize those who can least afford it. That's not just New Democrats saying this. The Canadian Environmental Law Association called for a legislative requirement to use revenue from the cap-and-trade program to counteract the impacts of the program on low-income communities. They suggested that the California example of 25% to start with, but possibly more, should "be used to mitigate the impacts ... on low-income, First Nation and other marginalized communities."

So, Speaker, it didn't seem to me to be an unreasonable request to the Liberal members on that committee that studied this bill to consider this as a matter of some significance. After all, their bill is based on others already in effect and already taking such action. But no, they wouldn't. They wouldn't have it. They wouldn't have any of it.

So I ask you, Speaker: Can the language before us today be even remotely seen as fair, effective and transparent? I think not. I think it's looking more and more like a Liberal cash grab. It will be a slush fund that the Liberals will be using to scratch their way out of debt on the backs of the most vulnerable of Ontario's citizens.

New Democrats—in Ottawa and in our provinces—have always been champions of the environment. We believe in lowering the greenhouse gases that have contributed to climate change. We recognize the crisis our planet is facing. We don't wish to see the Earth's average temperature jumping by two degrees. We expect irreversible harm would result. That's why we say it is so important—so absolutely vital—that we get this right the first time. We favour taking the politics out and putting some common sense back in.

I mentioned last week, Speaker, that I'm very proud to have five grandchildren now: four girls and a boy. I want to leave this planet in better shape for them than it is right now. I'm sure I'm no different from anyone else in this chamber. We don't want to sit back and watch the world destroyed by pollution. We don't want to sit back and do nothing as our citizens in most need fall further and further behind.

We have an opportunity right here and right now to correct a mistake. There's no shame in admitting to a mistake. There is honour in correcting a wrong. It is wrong that, so far, the Liberals haven't turned our attention to the details in this bill, details that harm our citizens living in northern and remote communities, our citizens living at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. We shouldn't burden them with more costs. We should provide a rebate for their extra costs, and the Liberals can do it with a stroke of a pen.

I know they're anxious to pay their bills and show a balanced budget before the next election, but why not use some of this new revenue stream to offset the added bite that this bill will take out of the wallets of those who can least afford it? Think about it. It's the right thing to do.

Of course, Speaker, it would also be the right thing to do to make sure that Ontario's Environmental Commissioner had a voice and a role to play with this new bill. Right now, she's completely disregarded. She needs access to information so the cap-and-trade system can be properly assessed, so we can measure the effectiveness of this program, and so we can judge whether we're doing the right things.

The Financial Accountability Officer says he won't be able to tell whether the government will actually spend the cap-and-trade revenue on new greenhouse gas reduction initiatives. Speaker, the purpose of the bill is to create a regulatory scheme to reduce greenhouse gases to



protect the environment, to help us transition to a low-carbon economy and to coordinate such actions with other jurisdictions as part of a global response to climate change.

Who's to judge the success of that initiative? I would suggest the Environmental Commissioner, the Financial Accountability Officer and the Auditor General among others, as well as the general public. If the public doesn't like what it sees, how it's being rolled out, how their money is collected and spent and why, then the public will have the final say. Believe you me, Speaker, when the public sees how these Liberals are using these funds with no accountability, the public will indeed have the final word. Actually, Speaker, it'll be two words: "You're fired."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I am absolutely delighted to have a chance to comment on the member from Windsor–Tecumseh's comments. I've got to say, Speaker, that that is the strangest way to say thank you I've ever heard from a member of the opposition parties.

I sat through those committee hearings in general government. I sat as we went through amendment after amendment being proposed by the third party, and we accepted them. Maybe not precisely the moment they came forward, but we worked with them in order to craft an amendment that would work for all of us.

In fact, in one amendment we were agreeing with them to go forward with it, but after an hour and a half of filibustering by the official opposition, we forgot what the motion was and we actually voted against it. We were able, through our initiative with legal counsel and the Clerk, to be able to get that motion back in another place because we were co-operating absolutely fully with the members of the third party. I've heard the minister repeated times give credit where credit was due to the member from Toronto–Danforth, notwithstanding his histrionics today, but giving credit because we worked together on it.

I'd get this criticism if it were coming from the members of the official opposition because we didn't accept any of their motions because there were no amendments there that would have done anything to improve the bill. In fact, the cruel irony of what the member from Windsor–Tecumseh has to say about the one amendment he talked about, the 25% going to low-income households—a noble objective, but what that in effect would do is take our cap-and-trade scheme and turn it into a tax-and-dividend scheme for 25% of the proceeds involved, which puts him now firmly in the camp—at least 25% of him—of the members of the opposition party who want tax-and-dividend programs.

It's absolutely important: This is not a social income distribution system under cap-and-trade. As noble as that objective is, this is about reducing greenhouse gases, and that's why those kinds of amendment had to be rejected as we did reject the amendments associated with adaptation, because that's not the intention of this bill.

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions or comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'm pleased to stand and offer my comments to the remarks by the member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

I listened with interest to what he was saying, and I have to agree with a lot of what he was saying. We should be working together on these things, because it is an important issue. However, we've seen from the past that trying to work with this government has been an issue when amendments, or whatever else, are rejected at a lot of committees, not just the one that was handing this issue.

He also said he had five grandchildren. I have five grandchildren too. You know something? They're all \$22,000 in debt right now, every one of them. This is before this "scheme," as the member from Beaches–East York just said, is implemented. What effect it will have on the people of Ontario currently is going to be an issue. Certainly, by the time my grandchildren become taxpayers, it's going to be more of an issue.

We believe that this should be a revenue-neutral bill. However, that has been firmly rejected by the government, with a lot of the money going out of the province.

I think the member from Windsor–Tecumseh had a lot of things right, in that we need to address this situation but do it in a way that is going to be fair to Ontarians.

Right now, I have some in the agriculture business switching to diesel generators because they can't get natural gas. I have some industries changing to natural gas generators because they can't afford the hydro. Now we see, from recent articles, that that may be eliminated in a few years by what the Minister of the Environment has said in a news release that we saw in the papers.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Continuing with questions and comments: the member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to comment on the speech given by my colleague the member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

I came across an article this morning from the Guardian that states that April marks the highest global average temperature that we've ever had since we began recording global temperatures. This is a pattern of seven months in a row where we've set records.

Evidently, obviously, global warming is here. I think that's shown in the title of the bill: Climate Change Mitigation. We are, even in the title, accepting that we will now, as a society, have to mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Time is of the essence. That begs us to come to real, rational and concrete efforts to support our communities in working together to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

That's why I take a little bit of issue with the member from Beaches–East York when he says that this isn't social engineering—I'm sorry, I can't quote you verbatim—that this isn't a social distribution program. What you're acknowledging is that, through the imple-



mentation of this bill, you are going to harm the most vulnerable people in the province, when you know and acknowledge that they aren't going to be able to handle the economic impacts of this bill.

What we're talking about is recognizing and acknowledging that the new revenue that you're getting is coming from those people. They, today, can't afford to make ends meet, but you don't care, evidently. You don't care. This is about the Liberal agenda, and that's okay. What we're talking about is making it fair, making it equitable and transparent, and having buy-in from society.

We know that all the programs that these guys have delivered, they've got it wrong, each and every time, the first and second time. Let's get it right the first time for once.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted to join in this debate.

The member from Windsor–Tecumseh mentioned he has five grandchildren, and then the member from Perth–Wellington mentioned he had five grandchildren. Speaker, I am the proud grandmother of five grandchildren, too. I think the eldest just turned eight last week.

I look at those beautiful little children and I, too, think about what we need to be doing here, today, in the positions that we hold to ensure that they inherit a planet that is habitable and that can sustain the population.

We do need to change how we conduct business. We do need to address issues around climate change very seriously. There are real costs associated with doing nothing. I think we all have a moral responsibility. Change is difficult—change is always difficult—but we would be in dereliction of our duties if we did not take this kind of strong action.

I look at the pages who are with us today. They don't have a say in this debate, although I bet they have some ideas. But I'll bet you if you asked the pages, they would say, "Do whatever you need to do to make sure that our planet remains one on which we want to live," so that they too can stand up one day in this House and talk about their five grandchildren.

Speaker, when it comes to low-income people, I think everyone in this House knows that we do have a support program for people on low incomes when it comes to helping to pay their electricity bills: the Ontario Electricity Support Program. It's been very disappointing to hear some members of the opposition say that it's not their job to inform their constituents. In fact, it is their job.

All of this together will make a brighter future for Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That's four questions and comments, which concludes this round.

I return to the member for Windsor–Tecumseh for his reply.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** You know, I'm a little bit surprised here that the member for Beaches–East York

would admit to being dazed and confused while being on the committee and forgetting what he was voting on. Forget that the amendments were there; he couldn't remember what he was voting on.

He also said that it was a "noble objective," but that the disadvantage would be getting 25% of the revenue. But they're doing it in California, they're doing it in British Columbia, they're doing it in Alberta, or will be doing it in Alberta, and this is the model on which this bill is based.

The sad part of this bill is that the Liberals haven't sold it very well. They haven't gone out and told the people yet exactly what they're doing with the money. So the impression amongst a lot of people, not just on this side of the House but in the general public, is that you're setting up a slush fund. You've got a cash grab going on that's going to help you pay down your debts, that's going to help you pay your bills, and it's going to cost them more money. With that out there, I'm telling you, you're going to run into a wall of opposition.

My friend from Perth–Wellington mentioned his five grandchildren, and the Deputy Premier as well. I must say that the Deputy Premier talked about a moral responsibility. I believe, New Democrats believe, it is a moral responsibility to look after the most vulnerable in our society, to give a hand up to those at the lowest income levels. If they're doing it in California, if they're doing it in Alberta, if they're doing it in British Columbia, for God's sake, why aren't we going to do it in Ontario? We have to do more. We're going to be costing them more money. We have to go out of our way to make sure that they won't be paying more of the price, that we won't be hitting them with more of the impact that this bill will leverage, will lay on their heads. We've got to do more to look after the most disadvantaged. That's why we were hoping the Liberals would listen to our amendments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** We've had quite an interesting debate on this bill this afternoon. I've heard a lot of things that certainly interest me, in different members' perspectives on this bill and how they figure it's going to work or not going to work. I think we should go back and get an idea of just exactly what cap-and-trade is, because that definition has maybe been lost a little bit.

Under a cap-and-trade scheme, the government sets gradually decreasing limits, or caps—that's where the "cap" comes in—on the amount of greenhouse gas emissions allowed from companies that meet a certain threshold. In Ontario, that threshold will be 25,000 tonnes for major emitters. And for major emitters, that will be something that will—a definition will come out for who is a major emitter.

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Companies that exceed those limits must purchase emission allowances from companies that come in under the cap. That can be a dangerous part of this whole thing. These purchases, or trades, put a market price on carbon.



Companies can also exceed their caps by purchasing off-set credits, which, in Quebec, include capturing methane from manure storage facilities and landfills.

Despite the concerns of industry, Speaker, the government has rushed to table this bill. They intend to ram it through—of course, that's what we're seeing here—to get their cap-and-trade scheme, which was mentioned by the member from Beaches–East York, up and running and generating new revenue by January 1, 2017. Ontario's scheme will be linked to those already operating in Quebec and California under the Western Climate Initiative.

Speaker, the government intends to raise \$478 million from this cap-and-trade in 2016-17. By 2017-18, the Liberals will increase cap-and-trade revenue to \$1.9 billion. That's actually up from their projections of \$1.3 billion. This revenue will cover their spending spree on the Green Investment Fund as well as other major projects and programs that are supposed to be outlined in the government's upcoming climate action plan.

Speaker, in this province, we've had so much experience with the Green Energy Act—not good experience at all. This is another scheme that was intended to fill in or produce electricity and reduce greenhouse gases, and it was called green energy. The difficulty with this business is that when the wind isn't blowing and the sun isn't shining and these wind turbines aren't producing and the solar panels aren't producing, you have to have gas-fired generators online to take up the slack. So what's green about it? You're putting pollution back in the air.

With all the subsidy money that has been spent on these turbines, they only produce about 4% of the electricity being produced in Ontario. All those turbines you see out in the country—they're the most visible. From Essex, right up north, along the lake, along Huron county, into parts of Wellington county, which I represent, here it is, less than 4%, with all those turbines in the air. It hasn't been a success at all, except if you happen to own the company that's putting the wind turbines up. So it has been a terrible failure.

They continue approving these applications. In fact, Speaker, whether you know or not, they're actually going to put one up between a couple of airports up in Collingwood—terrible decision. I would hate to have trouble in a small airplane and have to dodge those things or get into some bad weather where you can't see them—if you're in a small airplane trying to land at that airport.

The proposed cap-and-trade scheme would cover roughly 150 emitters and would operate within three-year compliance periods, the first being 2017 to 2020. The government will set an overall limit on emissions, and both sell and give free allowances to companies to emit up to that limit. Each allowance is equal to one tonne of greenhouse gases. According to the Liberals' budget, they will set the initial carbon price at \$18 a tonne. During the compliance period, emitters would be required to meet caps that decline between 4% and 5% a year. If emitters cannot meet those caps, they must purchase allowances to ensure they hold enough allow-

ances to equal their permitted emissions during the compliance period. Some trade-exposed industries, like the cement, steel and chemical industries, have received their free emission allowances and therefore will not face higher costs to meet declining caps. However, the government is requiring the natural gas and petroleum industries to purchase all of their emission allowances during the first compliance period. That is why the cost of natural gas, gasoline, diesel and propane will go up.

Speaker, this is of great concern to my riding and certainly many ridings in rural Ontario and many ridings in northern Ontario because we depend on some of these fuels to supply electricity to where we live and some of the industries we are providing. There's a number of diesel-powered generators, as I said before, in my area, powering grain operations because now, unfortunately, it's cheaper to do that than buy hydro from Ontario Hydro. It's more cost-effective. Unfortunately, they are putting pollution into the air, and they know that, but there comes a time when, if the books aren't balancing, you have to do something sometimes that maybe is not what you should be doing. But you still have to pay the bills. As we see with more of these things happening throughout Ontario, this type of thing is going to continue.

I also worry, Speaker, as we've seen—and this has been brought up many times in the House today, at least by this side and the third party—in an article that came out over the weekend in a local newspaper, that even this government is having an issue with this whole energy business because now we find out that they want to get rid of natural gas in a number of years. The Minister of the Environment kicked around the nuclear industry last weekend and certainly attacked the car industry last week. So we don't really know where they're going. I don't think they know where they are going on some of these issues. It sure caused a lot of talk in the business industry and in the energy industry as to just exactly what's happening here.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Nuclear industry.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** The nuclear industry. When statements like that come out, Speaker, it affects the economy of this province and certainly will affect job creation. If companies are looking at these types of statements and see that the government is having issues within their own caucus, as we've seen this past week, why would you want to invest in Ontario? Why wouldn't you take your company somewhere else or move what you have here and go somewhere else when all this talk is going on, when the government of the day can't even figure out what they want to do, and when they do try to figure out what they want to do, then it's changed the next week and these documents are leaked to the public? I can see some real worry about industries that are in Ontario right now and maybe some of those that were maybe planning to come to Ontario, and that's unfortunate.

This is a great province. We have so much potential in this province and energy has to be stable. We have to



have a stable energy source. We have to have confidence in where that energy's coming from, and that it will be there today, tomorrow and the next day. What's happened this last little while certainly doesn't give industry much confidence, in my opinion, of either staying here or relocating here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, it's no surprise that people in this House all agree that we need to do something about our impact as humans on this planet and this community we call home. It's very clear on many levels that we've left an impact, that we've had an impact on our environment, whether we look at the greenhouse gas emissions that we've produced as a society, whether we look at climate change or something more concrete and real that no one can deny, that we've polluted our waters and our land, the earth.

If we look at a real-life example, I was speaking with someone who told me they used to swim in the Don River, the river that comes through Toronto, that empties out in Lake Ontario. They used to swim in that river. He was mentioning how that same river that he and his friends used to come together and go on weekends to swim in is now so polluted that he would not be able to swim in it. That was in his own lifetime.

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If we look at the impact intergenerationally—not just in one lifetime, but in future generations—it's something that's very troubling. But there is hope. There is the possibility of changing this direction. We have an amazing capacity for innovation. We can positively impact our environment. Much like we are concerned about our homes—we want to make sure we take care of them, keep them clean, keep them safe—we have that same responsibility to our environment.

While I'm encouraged by a plan that is purported to protect our environment through cap-and-trade, we need to make sure that this plan isn't just a PR exercise or something that sounds good in a headline. It has to be effective in actually creating results. It actually has to change something. We don't have the luxury of having a flashy news line; we need real results that actually improve our environment and reduce the emissions that we're producing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Again, it gives me pleasure to have a chance to comment on the member from Perth-Wellington and his comments on Bill 172.

Let me start by saying that the member referenced a couple of times in his remarks me using the expression "scheme," as if he had got me in some kind of a gotcha. I know the member from Owen Sound would be the same. I just want to give you guys a little bit of a grammar lesson here, because "scheme," as a noun, is defined as "a large-scale systemic plan or arrangement for obtaining some particular object or putting a particular idea into effect." It's kind of neutral.

But if you want to get into the verb "scheming," then as a verb, "scheming" tends to have more of a nefarious meaning. But as a noun, it's perfectly right to understand that a "plan" and a "scheme," in the context we're using them, are perfectly acceptable. Some members might think I should withdraw or that I might clarify, but I have no intention of doing so. This is a scheme. This is a plan. It's a plan to achieve a particular objective.

The interesting thing is that it's the particular objective which we don't believe is shared by the member opposite from Perth-Wellington. They want to go down a tax-and-dividend route, which will not have the kinds of benefits we know we can get from a cap-and-trade program. If you just take the money through gas taxes and give it back to people, they won't be making the kinds of significant carbon change reduction decisions necessary, unless that amount is extraordinarily high.

That's why in BC they're not getting the reductions and carbon credits that they'd hoped. They're not getting them because to do so, you'd have to increase the price of gasoline 30, 40, 50 cents a litre to change behaviour. I've spoken about this before. It relates to the inelasticity of demand for energy. So it's absolutely important that we recognize that we are with a very important scheme here to do the right thing, which is to reduce carbon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's always a privilege to get up, especially when I get to follow the member from Beaches-East York and his latest scheme, I guess. Maybe he's right about the dictionary, but people have a feeling for what the word "scheme" is and that's probably a polite way to put this whole plan, if that's what you want to call it.

We look at the objective, and people are starting to wonder, are we looking at just bankrupting this province? You've done your best over the 13 years. The Green Energy Act has placed it so that our energy is so high that I'll often talk with the member beside me here when he talks about farmers putting in diesel generators. They're doing that because they can't afford the electricity extensions.

In Glengarry-Prescott-Russell—one of his constituents asked me to go up to talk to him. He had a huge diesel generator for three-phase power. He said it was much cheaper than getting Hydro One in. Isn't that sad that you can now generate on a one-on-one basis? And that really generates another serious problem: As people start to get off the grid, who's going to pay for it?

Unfortunately, he talked about being confused and dazed at the committee meetings. I know sometimes it's hard to keep interest in some of these meetings, especially when—we went through our amendments; they didn't accept one of them. A lot of it was around the Financial Accountability Officer, where we were trying to listen to the warning he had given: that this bill was outside his reach and outside the reach of the Auditor General. I can't help but wonder, why would this government do that? What are they afraid of to have an independent set



of eyes looking at it? This is a huge amount of money. We're talking not millions, but billions of dollars in credits and money that will be collected from this scheme.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** One last question or comment? The member for Essex.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thanks, friends. It's an honour to join this debate, one of the more crucial debates that I think any one of us will ever have in our careers as elected officials. There's no more pressing issue facing our species than what we are doing to our planet and how we are to ensure that it is habitable for generations to come.

I think one of the first things we have to do is acknowledge that what we've done in the past has led to where we are today. The systems that we've put in place—our economic systems, our systems of utilizing our resources, resources extraction—all have to be scrutinized. And we have to do it through a lens of humanity, of course taking into consideration all the economic impacts, the health impacts, the societal impacts that such a monumental change of this sort will place. But I think we're up to the job. If we weren't, then I don't think we would have put our names on the ballot. I'm certainly up to the job. My community and our communities demand us to do that. Of course, we won't always agree, but what we have to do is persevere in the knowledge that what we are doing is right.

We have the luxury of actually even having this debate in a democratic system and a democratic society. It is a luxury that we afford and, therefore, it is our responsibility to use this democracy to try to fix and figure out some of the world's most pressing problems. I'm just wholly encouraged that we're having this debate. I'm listening intently to all members, and I'm thankful that it's being conducted in a respectful way.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That's the end of our questions and comments for this particular round.

I return to the member for Perth–Wellington for his response.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I would like to thank the members from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, Beaches–East York, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Essex for their comments.

It's interesting. It's too bad—I guess I can't say what I was going to say, but there's a definition in here or an explanation from a former member of this House by the name of Greg Sorbara. He said, "The Liberals' cap-and-trade scheme is a cash-grab in the name of the environment—plain and simple." Then he said—what's worse—"There's no evidence anywhere in the world that ... cap-and-trade ... actually does work to significantly reduce carbon emissions." He continued, "Until I see that evidence ... I have to be a little bit skeptical about the whole scheme, other than it's going to bring a lot of new money into the government."

I think that's the issue here. Certainly, we would favour a carbon-neutral plan, but that would be no good

to this government because it would bring in no more money—no more new money—for them and we all understand the serious debt problem this government has. That's why they went to this type of thing, because of their debt problem and the lack of management for the last number of years that this government's been in power. We're over \$300 billion in debt and they're going to be using this money to pay for some of their other things, such as to help pay for infrastructure and things like that. That's what it is, plain and simple: It's a tax grab.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

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**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Again, Speaker, it's an honour to speak here. First and foremost, the Ontario New Democratic Party supports a cap-and-trade system as a way to address climate change. However, we want the system to be fair, we want it to be effective and we want it to be transparent. That's where I will focus the majority of my comments.

My colleague the member from Windsor–Tecumseh talked a lot about the fairness aspect. He pointed to jurisdictions like California and British Columbia that have carved out portions of their cap-and-trade system in terms of the revenue that they receive, to identify the impact that their systems have on low-income and vulnerable citizens. It may be one of the more progressive things that those jurisdictions have ever done, in acknowledging, before they even implement legislation, that that legislation is going to hurt some people and, "We're going to make sure that we mitigate that first and foremost."

Why do that? Well, my colleague spoke about our moral responsibility to do that. I think, again, as humans on this planet, we have a responsibility to ensure that there is equality and fairness and justice, and that every person has the ability to live in dignity and live without the burdens of poverty, especially if we know that the legislation and the actions of a government increase those burdens on people. It's our absolute responsibility to acknowledge that, and it's something that the government has failed to do.

Why are we so strong on this issue and why are we so adamant that it should make up a portion of the cap-and-trade system? Any sociologist that you speak to around the planet, anyone who studies income inequality and poverty, will tell you that inequality threatens the social fabric of societies. It's indisputable. Where you find growing levels of inequality is where you find the fabric being dismantled. You find higher rates of crime; you find higher rates of incarceration; you find higher rates of health-related, socio-health-related impacts.

If you know, and it has been acknowledged by the member from Beaches–East York—I can't believe he said it, but he has a tendency to say things that aren't well thought out; it is at least a measure of candour on his part. If you know that this bill—they don't really care whether it does harm some people. I think that's a failure



and I think it's inexcusable to acknowledge that your legislation will harm people and yet you will do nothing to mitigate that.

Again, acknowledging that the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act has the potential of increasing inequality, let's imagine the costs associated with that increase in inequality. Everyone knows it's going to cost us more downstream in higher levels of health care, in higher levels throughout our judicial system and our criminal system. This is just what happens. It's not what we like, it's not what we want, but, as society becomes less and less fair, people tend to look at other means to survive. We can't let that happen. We have to address it; we have to acknowledge it. It costs money, frankly. I think it's a reasonable starting point to acknowledge it and to set aside money in the case that those effects actually transpire. So that's the fairness part of it.

I'm going to jump to the transparent part of it because, as we know, through the mechanics of the climate change mitigation act, or through even a cap-and-trade system, there is revenue that the government will indeed take. Our contention is, of course, what will they do with that revenue? We've seen the priorities of this government before. We've seen them over the last 14 tired years of their tenure here. Of course, we can't say with a good degree of confidence that they have made the right choices. Whether it be in health care or education or infrastructure or job creation, we've seen failure after failure after failure, and it's about time, as far as I'm concerned, that they get it right the first time. It saves us a whole lot of money when you do that.

We would point to the transparency aspect in terms of, what are they going to do with their money, with the money that's recovered? As the legislation sits and states, there's a potential for the government to actually take the revenue and just tack it onto the provincial debt. I guess they believe not only in trickle-down economics, but they believe in trickle-down climate change mitigation.

I think I'm understanding the rationale there: that if they pay off their debt, then they will be able to, I guess, borrow at a more preferred lending rate and make other expenditures somewhere else—a convoluted way to go about addressing one of the most important issues facing our species.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I believe the minister has been trickling on us all.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Oh, I'm not going to go there. But we would say: Wouldn't it be a lot more of an effective mechanism to identify specific and strategic measures to absolutely combat climate change? One of the ways that you can do that is working with our municipal partners who are on the front lines of supporting economic investment and economic activity that does that. Let's ensure that we're working in tandem with them and in partnership with them.

Why point to this? Well, for the viewers who are tuning in, when we have our experts analyze the bill and the use of the proceeds in the greenhouse gas reduction

account, the bill sets up an accounting procedure, known as the greenhouse gas reduction account, to track accounting transactions to be attributed to the cap-and-trade system. Unlike the existing greenhouse gas reduction account that was established with Bill 185 in 2009 to receive cap-and-trade revenue—so they were already anticipating a cap-and-trade system—this new account does not record the inflows and outflows of money like a bank account. So we essentially will not know how much revenue comes in; we won't know how much revenue comes out. It's bewildering. Speaker, that we can set up a massive new entity to receive and recover revenue and penalties through the cap-and-trade system and not actually know what the value of the cash flow is in that.

Again, the GGR account has now become an abstract accounting procedure with rules for when the balance in the account may be increased and when it can be decreased. Anyone tuning in and listening to that example of how they're going to ensure transparency on the money side, I guess, would be left with a whole host of questions, as I am—and we're in the room here. Although the government isn't putting up speakers to this bill, I would hope that they would clarify that aspect for us, but also for the general public. Because if they don't know where the money is going and they don't know how much you're actually recovering, you're not going to get support for this bill, and, my goodness, if we've ever needed support for something as transformational as this bill, it's now.

It is incumbent upon the government to deliver those answers. Be transparent. This has not been the record of the government over so many other files. We can point to Ornge Air Ambulance; we can point to eHealth; we can point to the cancellation of the gas plants. Transparency has not been a part of their mandate and their operating motives.

So we would like them to do that. We would like them to acknowledge not only that this bill has the potential of going sideways so much as to have the unintended consequence of absolutely harming people, but also of having a failure to have citizens buy into what they know and what we know we need to do. We can't afford—time is running out.

J. Rockström, in a publication from *Nature* of September 2009, put a paper forward, some data that states that we have already breached the ecological boundaries of a safe operating space for humanity. We're already blown past that. Whether it be climate change, whether it be biodiversity, hydrogen cycles or ocean acidification, we're already blown through those thresholds.

Again, it is our responsibility to do it right and get it right the first time.

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, there is a lot to agree with in what the member said. He voiced some of the concerns that almost anybody has when embarking on a new challenge in which the frontier that you're moving into is one that's largely unexplored.



Having grown up during the period where climate change went from something where those two words, "climate" and "change," were not connected, to the point where people have said, "Well, maybe there's a link between what we're doing and what's happening on earth," to the point now where there is simply no doubt, it wasn't possible to foresee, as the world economy developed, how human activity would translate into a permanent, lasting change in the environment.

Two hundred years ago, when we talk about using energy, for example, the energy that civilization used came from human beings and from animals. During the 20th century, a lot of that energy came from coal and from oil and electricity. Now, in the 21st century, we are phasing out the use of coal—oil, somehow or other we're going to have to work our way through during the 21st century—and of course foreseeing a larger role for clean and green electricity.

Whenever one is trying to do something for the first time, it's important to keep your scope to the point where it can be accomplished. Many of the suggestions that the member made were perfectly legitimate suggestions: Let's see if we can take climate change and learn to walk before we run and learn how the first set of initiatives rolls out before we begin to add on additional layers of complexity. Other than that, I thank him very much for his helpful suggestions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's a pleasure to bring comments to my colleague from Essex. He brought up three words: fair, effective and transparent. With the "effective" part, our party brought a number of amendments to the committee when they were debating, and not one of those was actually accepted. I still don't believe in here that one party over another party has the knowledge game.

We were talking earlier about the scientist from Winnipeg who probably knows the minister. Bill Gates believes this is the smartest man in the world. So you have the richest man in the world believing that this is the smartest man in the world, and yet we have the environment minister suggesting to us, "No, no, they don't really know what they're talking about. Just believe me and all will be good in the world." When they won't accept one amendment, that raises doubt significantly.

He talked about transparency. The Financial Accountability Officer has actually raised significant concerns about things in this bill. Particularly, what I want to ask the minister—as my colleague from Huron—Bruce has—is: Why can't the minister tell us just how much exactly it's going to cost Ontarians to implement his version of this scheme? Their former Liberal finance minister, Greg Sorbara, is calling it a "scheme" and says that he thinks it's only a way for them to raise money.

We need to always be fair in everything we do, but we have to be—and I said this earlier—we need to be balanced. We certainly have concerns about the climate and where our world is, but we have to be balanced in our approach so that we are actually doing things that are

going to physically make a difference at the end of the day.

The other piece for me, and it kind of wraps up all of those, is a scheme that actually allows credits to be bought. What you're really allowing is those people who have a lot of money the ability to pay their way through, but they're actually not decreasing any of their polluting. If they're truly sincere about fixing the planet, as the minister suggests he's going to do with this bill, then I think we should actually not allow people to just buy their way out and keep polluting the way they did and just kind of turn a blind eye to it.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, lots of challenges with this bill, and I don't think it's going to fix the planet, as the minister suggests that it is.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd like to thank the member from Essex. It was great submission that he put in. He comes from labour; I come from heavy industry in Hamilton. I have over 30 years' experience. I've seen all kinds of smokestacks with scrubbers and ventilation systems and screen houses and filtration systems—huge filtration systems on the steel plants—and I've seen and worked around what they call baghouses, which are for coke-oven systems and by-product systems. I've seen all this. But why I'm saying that is because, for a lot of these considerations, they did not talk to the people in the industry. We had engineers who could have certainly made some contributions to the overall cap-and-trade system.

The cap-and-trade system involves larger companies selling credits they don't use to smaller companies who can buy them and use them, but that doesn't give an incentive to those smaller companies to make the changes they require because some of the systems that are very workable and doable are very, very, very expensive. These smaller companies and mid-size companies would not be able to afford it, so they would probably sit on their laurels a bit and not put the money into the systems because the systems are too expensive. So they'll buy the credits and try to get by on the credits, as opposed to doing something in their own particular regime.

I think what's going to happen here is that you're going to need what has always been around this place for the last 100 years: enforcement. Once again, you're going to need inspectors. Once again, you're going to need people to enforce this cap-and-trade and to actually track it. I think it's going to be a huge bureaucracy. I think it's going to take a lot of money to run it. I think, without the proper inspectors, I'm not quite sure it's going to go where the minister thinks it's going to go. I have very grave concerns.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I appreciate the comments made from the member from Essex.

There are concerns with this bill, the way it's going to work and the whole issue of cap-and-trade, but the bottom line is that there is no other alternative. We have



to take action. The world's polluting itself. The carbon emissions all over the world are getting higher and higher, so we have to start doing something about it.

I think that one example is California. They introduced a cap-and-trade method and they put a price on carbon. When they did this, companies were forced to become cleaner and turn to green energy. California's economy grew at a pace that exceeded the rest of the United States. In fact, it grew by 3.3% in California. The number of jobs did. It was well over the national rate. Companies are looking at more ways to become green, green-efficient and not focus on coal or oil, which are eventually, at one point in time, going to be phased out.

If we look at the example here in Ontario of the coal-fired plants, when they were open, people in Toronto, especially, and people in my riding in Scarborough Southwest, were breathing in a lot of pollution. During the summertime, especially when the air heated up, there would be so much pollution in the air that there were advisories to stay inside. Senior citizens, "Stay inside," and people who had asthma or other conditions, "Stay inside," because of the amount of pollution that was in there. Last year, a very telling example, we had zero days in Toronto of warning about what was happening outside.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** No, it's not wrong; it's right.

We've reduced the amount of coal, which produced a lot of pollution. We switched that off, and it has cleaned up the air quite a bit. We have to continue moving on forward and making sure the health of individuals in Ontario and around the world is kept better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Essex can now reply.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thanks to the members from Mississauga–Streetsville, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Hamilton East–Stoney Creek and Scarborough Southwest for their comments.

There are two things I want to talk about: Number one is that I didn't speak about jobs. It has been said that this is going to kill the automotive industry. I would submit that this presents an enormous opportunity for the automotive industry to transform. They already are innovative. They are already working within jurisdictions that have greenhouse gas systems and cap-and-trade systems. They are, actually, the leaders and pioneers of low-emission technology. They're setting the standard.

What kills jobs are multinational, multilateral free-trade agreements, signed by Liberal governments and Conservative governments, that open the doors to floods of imports that are made in jurisdictions that don't have climate change accords—cheap labour jurisdictions—and that the Conservatives and Liberals continue to sign. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, that the ink is just drying right now on, that the federal Liberals have signed, is and will continue eroding domestic manufacturing.

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Climate change is an enormous issue that presents an enormous opportunity. But without actually analyzing

what our current economic system is built on—cheap labour and the offshoring of good-paying manufacturing jobs—then you're doing a disservice to the discussion and the debate. Let's talk about fair trade that recognizes and trades with international partners and jurisdictions that have solid climate change plans that address the issues of trade-exposed industries and make sure that it's fair. That's how you protect jobs. That's how you ensure economic stability, and that's how you ensure a regenerative type of economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm pleased to finally have the opportunity to discuss Bill 172 this afternoon.

The Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act is a bill that warrants a lot more discussion than the government has allowed for outside of this House, so I'm eager to bring forward the concerns of my constituents from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex here to Queen's Park today.

This is especially true, since those who have raised concerns about this bill in particular, and the government's approach to environmental policy generally, seem to find themselves demonized by this Liberal government. It's a tactic that has distorted the conversation we are able to have about issues such as these and has led to this government creating policies in a vacuum, apparently unwilling or unable to work with almost anyone in the province.

Suggesting there might be a better approach or a different way of tackling climate change is being painted as heresy and apostasy. I have heard a lot of valid concerns about Bill 172. I'd like to note that I have heard these concerns from people who very much want to see improved environmental policies. They simply don't think this bill goes about it in the right way.

Although the government might like to paint this as an issue of the environment versus the economy, that is an oversimplification that does a disservice to the process of policy development. I believe we can have a thriving economy while we take action on climate change. It doesn't need to be an objective we pursue with scorched-earth tactics and a take-no-prisoners approach.

With more accountability and openness from the Liberal government, this province could fight climate change with policies that are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. The rushed, opaque process this government is pursuing, with a "damn the costs and the casualties" attitude, is not fair to the people of this province and it won't effect the kind of wide-ranging change I think this government wants to see.

But Mr. Speaker, there is an alternate course. I believe if we pursue comprehensive sustainability, then we can create real, lasting and positive change. Henry Ford once said, "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." And that is exactly what this Liberal government is missing. The government has brought this bill to third reading while still being unable to give Ontario's businesses basic information about how



the system will work, what impacts it will have, or other key information they need to budget and plan, even for the year ahead, which makes it seem highly unlikely that the government has done their due diligence to assess what impact cap-and-trade will have on our economy, our businesses or on the lives of the families of this province.

This government is already making our private sector fight with one hand tied behind its back by raising the costs of energy and creating new payroll taxes. But they seem bent on making sure they're blindfolded as well, unable to prepare for even the short-term.

Near my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Gerry Macartney, head of the London Chamber of Commerce, said that the Liberal government is rushing the cap-and-trade system and summarized their approach as "ready, fire, aim." London-area businesses, he said, would "like to see a little more aiming first." In fact, after meeting with the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Macartney's impression was that the minister himself didn't understand the details of his own policy.

How are Ontario businesses supposed to adapt and anticipate the effects of this legislation if the minister himself doesn't even seem to grasp what's actually coming?

The concerns of Ontario Chamber of Commerce head Allan O'Dette have been well aired here and in the media, and that's because he has given a very thoughtful, balanced critique of the Liberal government's approach. It's very easy to understand why he's calling for a delay.

The Minister of the Environment has said that those details are coming, but it seems to have taken some public pressure to force the release of the details of this strategy, which is absolutely absurd given that this is all supposed to come online in just over six months. To leave it to this late date is negligence. It's negligence on the part of this government to be so irresponsible and to play so fast and loose with the economy of this province and the livelihood of its people.

This is very basic stuff, but it seems to warrant an explanation since the message clearly isn't getting through. Stability is critical for sustainable economic growth. Ontario businesses are not going to be encouraged to invest or expand here when the government keeps throwing curveballs at them. Companies looking at coming to Ontario are certainly going to be discouraged by the volatility they see this government generating.

Fostering economic stability enables companies to pursue macroeconomic objectives and provide the market with stable prices and employment levels. It creates the right environment for job creation and for companies to maintain a balance of payments. In short, it leads to organic, sustainable growth. Stability generates confidence, and this stimulates investment in technology and human capital.

Speaker, how can companies be expected to effectively plan or mitigate risk when the basic elements of the business environment keep changing? I know this government thinks they can build up the economy by just

throwing money at companies they hand-pick, but that isn't actually a recipe for sustainable growth.

The government moving to push through and implement this scheme on such a short timetable unfortunately coincides with the pending release of the climate change action plan. The comments from the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and the details of the plan that were leaked to the *Globe and Mail* have raised the alarm in the business community. We've heard bold targets and wild dictates, but very little on the how, who or when of these plans. With madcap ideas and audacious aspirational goals being bandied about by this government around climate change initiatives, it raises serious questions about how all this newfound tax revenue generated by cap-and-trade is going to be spent. Based on what we've heard from the Minister of the Environment and his flagrant disregard for the auto sector, it seems much more likely that these funds will somehow be used to kneecap our critical industries rather than foster real economic growth in this province.

Speaker, this isn't a government that has a strong track record of doing its due diligence or examining the potential unintended consequences of their decisions. We have seen something all too similar with the Ministry of Economic Development and their allocation of grants and subsidies. Under the broad objective of stimulating economic growth, this government hands out \$5 billion annually almost entirely behind closed doors, mostly by invitation only, and with no real attempt to gauge whether this money does anything for the provincial economy whatsoever. The government refuses to tell the public where this money has gone, and they aren't tracking whether these so-called investments drive innovation, increase exports or even create long-term jobs. What we do know is that their efforts seem to have made a lot of Liberal donors very happy.

Now we have the Ministry of the Environment looking for its own big pot of discretionary money, and I see no indication that the methods and oversight used in that ministry will be any better than in the Ministry of Economic Development. If this government is going to be taking \$2 billion out of the economy every single year, they need to answer for where it's going.

The Liberal track record on this is shameful, and I'd be remiss if I didn't demand more accountability from this government on behalf of the people that I represent. Families are going to see their fuel costs increase by hundreds of dollars per year and their home heating costs will jump by almost \$500 per year, because of this bill. Where will the minister tell them this money is going?

So far, we've seen this government pay out nearly \$800,000 in rebates for cars that cost over \$100,000. That is the Liberal track record on this. That was taxpayer money, earned by the hard-working people of this province, which was funneled into one of the many sub-standard green initiatives brought forward by this Liberal government. How can the Premier possibly expect people to entrust an additional discretionary \$2 billion every single year to her government?



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Speaker, there is a better way to fight climate change. The take-no-prisoners approach this government is pursuing on environmental issues is not egalitarian, effective or helpful. The people of this province deserve better governance, and they deserve well-thought-out, comprehensive policies that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Bill 172 simply does not meet those criteria.

With my few seconds left, I want to put on the record once again that people in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex—and, I'm sure, everyone in this province—woke up to that unbelievable story saying that natural gas was going to be banned in any new home construction in this province in about 14 years. That's a disgrace, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It's indeed a pleasure to speak on the comments just made by the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. I listened intently to what he had to say, and I think there was more said in between the lines, as well. I think that what he was saying in between the lines was that for—how long have you guys been in power, 12 or 13 years now?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Too long.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** You would think there's a learning curve when you first come into power, but when you've been there 11, 12, 13 years or longer, you should know that when you present a major bill to the House, to the Legislature, you do it right. You take your time, you get your wording all together, and you know what you're doing.

I heard this afternoon that at committee—I know I'll be corrected if I'm wrong—the Liberals made 100 amendments to their own bill.

**Interjection:** It was 70.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Seventy? Seven zero? Seventy amendments to their own bill, Speaker, let alone that they turned down 100 from the PCs and adopted one or two of ours. When you present legislation and you have to amend it 70 times by your own party, you've done something wrong. You haven't done it right. You haven't thought it through. You rushed this bill without thinking about it. You should have prepared it better. You still can't sell it, because you're not looking after the lowest on the socio-economic scale. You've got to give them some hope for the future. You have to help them pay this bill when it comes down on their head and their shoulders.

You guys didn't get it right, and you should be ashamed for that. You come into the House now with big smiles, big smirks, with this new scheme that says, "We're all going to be in this together, but we're not going to worry about the people at the bottom; we're just going to talk about our friends at the top." That is wrong, and you should not be doing that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** It does give me some pleasure to rise today to speak about Bill 172. We've been speaking at length on this bill, and it has come up that a number of members have grandchildren—five grandchildren, in fact. I don't have five, but I do have one, and my little grandson George is going to be three this July, I'm proud to say.

**Interjection:** Yay, George!

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Yes, thank you.

I'm delighted, I have to say, that we are taking measures on climate change. I know that it's an ambitious agenda, but we need to act now. There is no time to delay, and it's clear that we have to act now.

I just want to spend a couple of seconds on the transparency and accountability side of this bill. I do want to remind the House that we would require an annual report of the funds being credited and charged to the greenhouse gas reduction account, as well as a description of the initiatives for which the funds were used. It is very important to make sure that we have accountability and that we do make appropriate investments. It would require the government to publish reports on the use of cap-and-trade proceeds, which will be invested in initiatives that reduce or support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

It has been said by a member of the third party that we're all smiles and smirks. We're very concerned about the environment, and I know that everybody in this House is, as well. I think that, if there is any confusion around this bill, I would encourage any of the members of the opposition or the third party to make sure that they get appropriate briefings to clear up any of those areas of confusion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I would like to commend the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex on his dissertation on this bill.

The member from Kingston and the Islands said that they were going to have somebody give us briefings. I guess that we should have them come. I would like to see the person come and give us this bill of goods that sold the Liberal caucus on this—maybe they haven't sold it to the caucus yet; maybe cabinet has to go and do that.

What a fortuitous leak that the Globe and Mail got, so that we had this exposé today on this. I am sure that the Premier is glad she is in Israel or wherever it is and she is able to dodge this for now. But anyway, we'll be back in a couple of weeks, and there will be questions then.

I am waiting to hear more from Unifor, and also from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. There are going to be major changes there to that. Agriculture has been led to believe that they are going to put hundreds of millions of dollars in the expansion of natural gas into rural Ontario. The Premier challenged agriculture to increase their production. To do that, they've told this government—I know the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Don McCabe, very well. He has told this government, along with his federation, that they need



access to that natural gas. I guess that they need to make sure they get that point across to Minister Murray, because obviously he didn't hear that.

Anyway, one way they could reduce greenhouse gases—they could do it very simply. They could adopt my private member's bill about reducing greenhouse gases by adopting liquid natural gas for tractor trailers. They're 3% of the traffic and 27% to 30% of the pollution. Now there is a fair and balanced way to decrease greenhouse gases in this province. We could move towards that, and it wouldn't cost \$3 billion a year.

I don't think anybody trusts this government—I don't think anybody trusts any government—to look after a fund of \$3 billion to \$5 billion. Who knows how much it's going to generate? If they were that confident in this, they should have run in an election on it. They didn't, and they should stop with this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to have a couple of minutes again to speak on any bill. Today it's Bill 172, on climate change and a low-carbon economy.

I think that there are few things that we all can agree on. Climate change is a reality; I think that everyone in the House can agree on that. The first time that it became a reality to me was when I was 16, and it was the first time that I saw a racoon in northern Ontario. It's been going on for a long time, because they are moving north. As a farmer, I see lots of other things that point to the climate changing.

I think the second thing that the majority of us in the House agree on is that cap-and-trade is a good system that can be made to work. I think that we can all admit—maybe most of us can agree with that.

Where some of us run into a bit of trouble is whether or not we trust the current government to be able to pull it off, so that it actually works and so it is truly accountable. We'll give you an example from this morning. We have got this \$1.9-billion fund, and it's supposed to be fully accountable. But this morning, we had an issue where the Minister of Energy is saying that we are making a profit selling surplus hydro, when it's actually costing us, and what he is calling a profit is the residual income. Quite frankly, we aren't sure that Liberal math is going to work when it comes to where these funds are actually put into the system.

Again, the first announcement was \$100 million to retrofit homes, put through Union Gas and Enbridge. When I asked, "Well, how are people with oil or people with propane—?" "Oh, well, they qualify. They go through Union Gas and Enbridge." That's not how the real world works. That's what we are concerned with: that the government across the way doesn't understand how the real world works.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex can now reply.

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**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It was a pleasure to speak to this bill this afternoon and the plan that this govern-

ment has to continue decimating the economy and make life much more expensive for everyday people in this province.

I'd like to thank the member from Windsor-Tecumseh for his comments, telling the government and warning the government to take their time on this and get it right.

To the member for Kingston and the Islands, who talked about an ambitious agenda, I would say, quite frankly, that this is a radical plan that's going to kill jobs in this province. It's going to increase the expenses for every family in this province, I guess to your advantage. It's going to take billions and billions of dollars out of the pockets of business and people. I think that's very unfortunate. It actually further demonstrates how out of touch this government has become after 13 years. Do you realize how people are struggling to make ends meet in this province?

I thank my good friend from Sarnia-Lambton—the king of Sarnia, as some call him. He has a great bill before the Legislature, a private member's bill. In fact, it just went through the Legislative Assembly committee—something sensible and reasonable that I think that this government should adopt.

Of course, I thank my friend from Timiskaming-Cochrane for his input.

We know that this is a divided government, a divided cabinet on this issue, hence why that document was leaked today. It wasn't intended to be leaked, from what I've gathered from the reporter on Twitter. But I want to get on the record that I can understand why the cabinet is divided. We've got a minister saying that he's going to kill 50,000 jobs in the nuclear industry and one out of every six jobs in the auto sector.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Let me begin by saying again that New Democrats have supported the initiative of a cap-and-trade system before, have called for it before, and strongly stand behind a program that will effectively reduce the amount of pollution that is being produced by our province. That's absolutely our position. As many people have stated before from our caucus, our concern is whether or not the plan proposed by this government will effectively achieve that result.

There are a number of areas that we're concerned with, but three key principles were repeated, and I want to add my voice to it.

We want to ensure that any plan that the government proposes satisfies three major criteria. The plan has to be fair, it has to be effective and it has to be transparent.

Before I get into the components and the criteria that the government has to satisfy for a plan to be sufficient in order to address these very serious concerns, let's lay out how important this concern is.

Like our member from Timiskaming-Cochrane stated, there is absolutely no doubt that humans have left a negative impact on our environment. There is no doubt that we have impacted our environment through various steps that we have taken, whether it's through polluting our water, polluting the air or polluting the land.



In addition, as a result of the emissions that we produce as a society, there are greenhouse gases that are impacting climate change.

We all agree in this House that climate change is a serious issue and the negative impact that we have had on this environment, on our environment, is a serious issue. We must do something about it. Whether it's in our own lives, for our own quality of living; whether it's with respect to the quality of air that we breathe; whether it's with respect to the water that we drink, we need to do something about the environment. We need to ensure that for one generation—for our generation—the environment is protected and, in addition, we have a responsibility to ensure that the environment is protected for future generations. That's something that we absolutely believe in. That's an absolute commitment that we all should have.

Now, how do we achieve that? We need to ensure that any steps we take as a society are actually effective. That's one of the key issues here: With respect to the plan proposed by the government, we have some serious concerns about its effectiveness. Will the plan proposed by the government actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

One of the key concerns is that the plan the government proposes allows for exemptions for the major polluters. Now, while we absolutely support the idea that there are certain industries that are going to be put at an unfair disadvantage because they have to compete with other jurisdictions where there is not a similar cap-and-trade system, and they may be in a position where they are not as competitive, having an allowance—an exemption—to ensure that our industries are able to compete makes some sense. But a system that allows all the major polluters to have an exemption—a blanket exemption—doesn't seem to make a lot of sense, and it does not bode very well for a policy that would be effective in reducing emissions. That's one of our major concerns.

The second concern is, with respect to having community buy-in, we need a plan that's fair. On a moral level, it should be fair but also as it concerns buy-in. If a plan that's proposed by the government disproportionately affects people from the lower socio-economic backgrounds or demographics, community members will be outraged that they are being forced to bear the brunt of a plan, but the folks that pollute the most are allowed to be exempt. A failure to provide any sort of consideration or attention to the realities of those folks is an unfair plan, and that's one of the major criticisms of this proposal.

Mr. Speaker, if the people of this province don't believe in this plan, this is not something we can move forward with. We need a plan that has buy-in, that people feel supportive of. One of the ways we can ensure that people believe in this plan is to make sure the plan is fair.

In general, fairness is a principle that should apply in all government policies, but in particular, with something like the environment, we don't have the luxury of creating divisions. This is something that we must act on.

This is something that requires the commitment of everyone in this province. If the government proposes a plan that divides the community—that pits people who are in a worse economic position against those who are in a better position—that's simply an unfair plan. It's not going to have wide buy-in, and that's going to cause disruptions for a plan that we need to implement.

With respect to transparency, some of the Liberal members got up and said, “Oh, this plan has transparency.” I strongly beg to differ. There are serious holes in the plan for transparency of what the government is proposing.

First and foremost, we have an Environmental Commissioner who is completely absent from any of this bill's discussion, from any of the elements of this bill. There is no consideration for the Environmental Commissioner. We have an Environmental Commissioner for a reason. They should be incorporated and involved in the process. The fact that they are completely absent in this legislation is a gaping hole. It is a serious concern.

The other area of concern is that the government proposes that revenue from this cap-and-trade program will be directed towards environmental initiatives. However, the way that the government has laid out that initiative—that the revenue will be used for these environmental initiatives—the problem is that there isn't a separate account that has been created. The funds will flow into a general account, and there's really no accountability to ensure that the funds will be used to advance some initiative that will actually help the environment.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** A slush fund.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The concern is that it is essentially creating a slush fund.

Again, we don't have the luxury of creating a plan that can create divisions. We need a plan that has the full support of the people of Ontario. Having a slush fund, having a proposal that doesn't specifically create a separate account committed or dedicated to environmental initiatives, does not create support or trust in the minds of the people.

In fact, we have a number of examples where this government has failed utterly to follow through on commitments they have made. It is eroding public trust not only in the Liberal government but in governments in general. That's something that is creating a great deal of apathy, and that's something that does not bode well for our democratic systems.

The other element that's very troubling is we have had numerous examples where delegated administrative authorities are not accountable. They don't have the oversight and are not institutions that are able to be properly supervised. They don't have the ability for the government to provide the accountability that we need to provide. This proposal of the government is to create another delegated administrative authority. They lack accountability. They are essentially a public service or a public entity but without any public scrutiny. That doesn't make any sense. We've seen what happens with delegated administrative authorities.



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One example is Taron. The system that's been created by Taron—it's essentially a public service, in the fact it only exists because it's the only option for new homeowners in terms of their warranty. It's essentially existing only because of the government, but it's not accountable to the Attorney General, it's not directly accountable to the government, and there have been numerous complaints about its effectiveness in whether it's actually providing a service to the public.

Similarly, if what the government is proposing here is to create another delegated administrative authority, we have that same concern. This administrative authority won't have the scrutiny of the government, and will not be something that the Attorney General or the Auditor General will be able to investigate. Again, that creates some problems with respect to transparency and it creates problems with respect to the public trust.

The point of any sort of cap-and-trade is to put a price on pollution. The goal of this placing a value on pollution is to reduce pollution. With respect to what the government is proposing, we don't know for certain if this plan will be effective. We don't know if the targets will be able to be achieved. We don't have any accountability with respect to those targets and how they can be achieved. So there are some serious problems.

Coming back to the initiative—we need a plan that reduces greenhouse emissions. We need a plan that reduces pollution. We need to do something to protect our environment. There is no debate. There is no question about that. We are committed to doing that. New Democrats are committed to doing that. I am personally committed to that, but what is the government proposing? Is it something that's actually going to satisfy that concern? We have serious doubts and serious concerns about that.

I want to say very clearly: This is a crucial turning point in our society. We have an opportunity to act now so that our future generations are protected. We have an opportunity now to protect our environment, not only for our generation but for future generations, and we don't have the luxury of not acting. We must act now. We must do something now.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I spoke earlier today and I wanted to add a few more comments. I wanted to speak particularly to this bill and how we have worked with the First Nations and Métis communities in Ontario.

The bill specifically acknowledges that First Nation and Métis communities have a very special relationship with the environment, and have had for generations and generations and generations. They are deeply committed not only physically to the land but spiritually to the land and culturally to the land—not only to the land, but the water, the air and all of the animals. The bill, out of respect—and more than just out of respect; there's a body of knowledge there that we want to tap into. So the bill does include a provision that requires the minister to consider any traditional ecological knowledge that a First

Nation or Métis community may have in respect of any action plan the government is required to prepare. That's called TEK: traditional ecological knowledge.

The bill also includes a provision making it very clear that nothing in the bill is intended to take away from the protections provided for aboriginal and treaty rights in the Canadian Constitution. That provision is intended to signify respect for those rights and is not intended to impact the interpretation or protection of those rights in the context of the bill.

I've been to some 63 First Nation on-site visits, many of them in the far, far north, and I've seen the effects of climate change in the Far North and how it's affected things like ice roads, fish, fowl and wild animals. This is a good bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's a privilege to get up to comment on the member from Gore-Malton. He talked about the need and opportunity to actually do something and have an impact. I think that's important. We see in front of us, I heard earlier today, a very radical plan. This government, if you go back less than two years ago, was very public when it was asked, during the last election campaign, whether they would move ahead with a carbon tax. They were very clear to say no, they wouldn't. There's a point there, that they don't have a mandate from the people to do this. But if they're going to go ahead, this plan is really all about getting more money. It's not about making a difference.

I heard a comment before: "Well, how would just putting a tax on it and making it revenue-neutral work?"—like they have in BC. It has shown that it has worked.

Will they have to increase the price of carbon as they go forward? That's something that they'll likely have to do, just as you'd have to do here with cap-and-trade. If you don't make the price of carbon significant, there's not a change.

By giving the money back to the people, there's still that advantage of not spending or not wasting your money on carbon if you can actually look at an alternative. By putting money in your pocket, that allows you to look at an alternative, and it's really a way that we could see as being productive and a plan that would actually work, instead of just taking money out of the economy and putting more and more people on social assistance, because we'll have more and more people who will be out of work, and more and more people who will be in poverty because it will cost more to heat your homes and more to live in this province. That's the plan we're going to. Really, it's all about a government that's out of money.

We think that our climate, and the world, is worth more than that. We want to see a plan that actually works.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I want to thank my colleague the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton. As a former criminal defence attorney, the guy knows how to dissect



and articulate an argument, and I think he did that very well during his 10-minute hit.

He pointed to the lack of accountability built into the bill—a glaring omission, to not bring in as a consultant, a valued partner, the environment commissioner. She's actually purposely excluded from any of the mandates built into the bill. It just seems ridiculous that the government would ignore and ostracize our environment commissioner, who comes with a whole host of information and knowledge and resources and third-party validation and transparency and respect. They obviously don't value that, which is par for the course for these guys.

I was just chatting with my colleague the member for Hamilton Mountain—

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

We were talking about the Detroit River, where I try to get in to fish, as much as possible, for world-class pickerel fishing. If you're on the American side, it's walleye fishing, and on the Canadian side it's pickerel fishing.

He asked me if it was a clean river. These days, it's amongst the cleanest. It's beautiful.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** The algae got it.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Well, despite the algae bloom in the lakes, the water quality is clean. Due to decades-old regulations that prohibited the dumping of toxins from the industrial chemical valley in Sarnia and upstream throughout Detroit, it's a clean system.

That took a lot of work. That took some pain, I'm sure. But because of it, we have a clean system, we have a clean ecology, and something that generations can partake in.

I hope that is the effect of this bill going forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I'm pleased to be able to join in the dialogue related to the presentation by our colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton on Bill 172.

I do have to agree with my colleague from Essex that it is pickerel fishing in northern Ontario. It's called the Pickerel River, not the walleye river, so we will always call it pickerel. It's very important that we distinguish that, too.

My colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton had a very eloquent speech. I don't agree with everything that was in it, but one thing that he did talk about, which was something that I thought was important, was the low-income households and what we need to do to address that. I know that the government, in committee, worked with the third party in bringing forward motions that would require this.

Let me quote that the climate change action plan would work on the impact of cap-and-trade on low-income households. The motion also required the plan to include actions to assist those households with Ontario's transition to the low-carbon economy.

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If we look, then, to what the auction proceeds must—again, I highlight that: must—be used for, it's for GHG emission reductions. The proposed authorized uses designated in the bill are energy sources and uses—production of renewable energy; land use and buildings, or the retrofitting of buildings, which is important not only throughout Ontario—I always highlight my great riding of Sudbury and northern Ontario and the importance of retrofitting buildings in the north; transportation; industry; agriculture, forestry and natural systems; and waste management. I know organic waste composting systems generate large amounts of greenhouse gases. This bill will actually address those.

And we are looking at, in conjunction with working with the third party, addressing low-income households.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton can now reply.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I want to thank all the members for joining in the debate. I appreciate their comments.

I was struck by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the importance of recognizing, first and foremost, our First Nations communities, aboriginal communities, and their generational knowledge with respect to the environment and how important it is to take care of our environment. I think that's absolutely something important to consider—I think that's at least one positive sign in the bill—but it has to be more than just lip service. We need to, in a meaningful way, really involve our First Nations communities as partners and as leaders and recognize their sovereignty and deal with them as sovereign partners.

One of the issues raised by our member from Essex was something that really spoke to me. When we talk about natural resources in our province and Canada in general—we have a tremendous natural resource: the natural resource of water. It's so offensive to me that our fresh water, which is such a precious resource in this world, is polluted and sometimes not drinkable. That's one of the issues that really speaks to the importance of environmental concern and protection. If we look at this precious resource and how it's being polluted, it really offends me in my core that it's not something that we should be able to drink at any point in time. Our rivers and our lakes should not in any way be contaminated. We should never have fear to be able to use that water, and the fact that we do have that concern is deeply troubling. It speaks to how important it is for us to commit to really working towards protecting our environment, not just because it's a resource, but because this is our home. We need to ensure that we protect it, not for ourselves, but for our future generations and everyone who can enjoy and live in this land.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm glad to add my comments to Bill 172 during third reading and have some discussion afterwards.



The Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act has come full circle. We've been through first reading, second reading and, of course, through committee, where, we've heard today, the government amended their own bill 70 times. They didn't pass any of our amendments that we tried to put forward to make the bill a little stronger. The government is using this to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, as I stated at second reading of this bill, that has been proven to be ineffective in actually reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

More or less, it has been coming across to people in this province, especially in my riding, that this is nothing more than a cash grab—that this government is going to utilize this money and, of course, spend it on whatever they wish. They do say that they may have some accountability and transparency in the system, but it's not a separate account outside of the general revenues; it's a line item. Of course, we all know creative accounting can occur, especially with this government, and the money, we know, will not be spent as it should.

We actually believe, on this side of the House, that if you're going to collect that money, you should be refunding it in other ways to the people of Ontario to mitigate the increased expenses in their lives, on top of the huge costs that this government has imposed on the people of this province over the last 15 years, including the health tax, the HST, which they brought in, the high hydro rates—one of the highest in North America—that they've brought forward in the name of green energy into municipalities, which clearly have said no over time.

It's quite absurd, Mr. Speaker, especially in my riding, where I had two municipalities right beside each other, 40 kilometres apart: One didn't want wind turbines, said no; it had a plebiscite with its constituents and 84% said, "No, we don't want them." Then I had another municipality not far away that said, "Yes, we'd love wind turbines." This government gave the wind turbines to the community that said no. It's that type of listening that gets us into trouble.

In second reading, I mentioned that there are other ways this government can act to help the environment out and where they've failed. I know they're trying to work on it now, but I mentioned wetlands. We've destroyed much of our wetlands in our province, which not only work to purify and filter out water but also help prevent the flooding that we're seeing. Probably one of the reasons Toronto floods so much when we get huge downpours is that they've pretty much exhausted all their wetlands in the area.

The other item that I've mentioned previously was in regard to stewardship councils, which were strong organizations throughout province. This government pretty much destroyed any stewardship councils. There are a few still going on out there, those that were strong enough to maintain. My Elgin Stewardship Council is quite strong because they have the resources themselves to maintain, but a lot of the stewardship councils in the province, through the changes this government has made, have disappeared.

Stewardship councils are strong in this province because they're the ones that will take a farmer's land or take a wetland that's been damaged and fix it up, rehabilitate it back into a wetland or create a wetland, working with organizations like Ducks Unlimited or the Nature Conservancy of Canada to ensure that that type of conservation is going on. I think that's very, very important, which this government is missing out on. It's utilizing conservation of our lands, utilizing the people in our province who will volunteer to work to create suitable environments that will help clean water and help prevent floodings and add an aesthetic effect to rural Ontario. That's what they should be working on. Those are the people they should be engaging. Instead, this government barges ahead not listening to rural Ontario and is stuffing wind turbines down people's throats.

Bill 172 will also cause continued economic impact to businesses. We've heard just recently that the chamber of commerce wrote the minister asking him to delay it another year so that they can actually see the costs that are going to affect businesses across the province so that they can be more prepared for the impact of another tax coming from this government on businesses.

As I said earlier, ratepayers already have to deal with high electricity costs. Now businesses are going to have to compound that—on top of the global adjustment charge that they get right now because of the Green Energy Act—onto this cap-and-trade scheme that this government has created. From what I've read, home heating will go up \$160 by 2017 and \$900 by 2030 because of this tax. Small businesses will see an increase of \$170,000 more a year for energy costs alone next year and more than \$900,000 by 2030, in combination. Mr. Speaker, that can only lead to job loss in this province. Many businesses, especially small businesses in this province, are having a hard time making ends meet, and the high cost of energy is only going to reduce it.

This government's bill—they did not change the transparency and they didn't change the accountability. We've seen, through their inability to manage other facets of this government, waste continually occurring, misspending, of course leading to scandal, without any great oversight other than themselves to oversee the money.

The bill itself does contain some stiff penalties for offences for both corporations and individuals. Individuals face fines of up to \$6 million or five years in prison for fraud, market manipulation and insider trading. That's well and good.

Hopefully, the OPP is not going to be investigating this government on anything with regard to this cap-and-trade scheme. We already have five OPP investigations against this government. It's almost as if the OPP have opened up an office just beside the Premier's office in order to continue their deliberations with regard to this government.

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Mr. Speaker, I also brought up in second reading, which I thought was quite telling, Steve Paikin's show *The Agenda*, where Greg Sorbara, who was former



finance minister in this government during the McGuinty years and one of the head organizers of the party, came out and said this government will sell its “imaginary product called carbon credits” and it will raise prices on all products purchased by Ontarians. Sorbara questioned this Liberal government by saying, “Although the [finance] minister said there are no tax increases, the fact is that there’s a \$1.9-billion increase. I call it a flow-through tax that will ultimately affect consumers.... It’s an interesting way to raise money while saying, at the same time, you’re not raising taxes.”

It’s interesting that one of the masters of Liberal spin has actually called them out on the Liberal spin. It’s unfortunate that this government does not sit back and listen to its own members saying that this is a bad plan; this is a bad idea.

Then, to top it off, as we’re finishing debate on third reading on this bill, lo and behold, the *Globe and Mail* receives a report leaked from the cabinet which obviously states that this government is in turmoil. There is no unanimity—is that the right—

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Unanimity.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Unanimity.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Unanimity; thank you. Tongue-tied. I can get it.

**Interjection:** There’s no buy-in.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** There is no buy-in. Thank you very much.

There is no one voice that suits all the cabinet. They are obviously split. For the cabinet to actually leak a document, I think it’s showing the breakdown that this government is having over this issue, and I would love to sit in, as the member from Sarnia-Lambton mentioned, on a caucus meeting to see how that debate goes. Because, really, the cabinet is in it together, but it’s the backbenchers that pay the price.

We have seen it with autism, where they have cut children five and under from having any sort of treatment. Once you reach five years old, the IBI is cancelled. You’ve seen high energy rates. I can just imagine the arguments going on and now, with this huge plan, in which the government is looking to end the use of natural gas in homes and businesses—what an effect that will have throughout the province. I can just imagine the arguments that they will be going through.

I had hoped the government will take the time and consult with Ontarians before going forward with this radical plan that they have. It’s unfortunate they don’t consult rural Ontario, but maybe this time they will open up before they move forward with plans that are going to hike energy rates, decrease available jobs and, at the end of the day, control what you can buy, how you can buy it and where you can live in this province.

I look forward to more questions and comments as we go forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I appreciate the comments from the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London. He talked a lot about fiscal accountability, and who can blame him?

We have a government that has time and time again shown their inability and their ineptitude to present us with value for the public dollar, whether it be the gas plants, Ornge, eHealth, whether it be our procurement process.

I can’t believe that we aren’t talking about this. We should be talking about it ad nauseam. Unfortunately, we’re too busy following the scandal of the day. But talk about a procurement process through Infrastructure Ontario, mandated through the Minister of Infrastructure, through the government and ultimately right to the Premier, because this is her baby. We have overspent to the tune of \$8 billion on public infrastructure where we didn’t have to. Over the last nine years this government vaporized—actually they didn’t even vaporize it because had they actually lit the money on fire, we would have at least gotten heat out of the dollars. We didn’t even get that. There is nothing to show for the extra \$8 billion that the Liberal government, under Kathleen Wynne as the Premier, has spent on infrastructure.

Imagine what we could do to mitigate climate change. Imagine what we could do to fund our school system. Imagine what we could do through our health care system. But you’re going to make excuses for \$8 billion of vaporized public money through infrastructure. How could you blame an honourable member like the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London when he says, “We don’t trust these guys to implement any type of system that deals with money”? There are some people you just can’t trust with the cashbox. More and more, the public are seeing and feeling that we can’t do that. We need oversight built in; we need accountability; we need transparency and fairness—things that this government is never able to deliver.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Speaker, it’s time that we got to the vote on the third reading of this bill. I say that for this reason: At second reading of the bill, we put about 10 hours of debate into the bill. It then—

*Interjections.*

**Interjection:** Keep going.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** It then went out to committee—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Thank you, Speaker. I want to tell you: 10 hours at second reading, about 20 hours at committee and nine hours on third reading. It’s unprecedented to spend nine hours at third reading of a bill, especially after 20 hours at committee and about 10 hours on second reading.

The members should be brave enough—they’ve made all of their arguments; there’s nothing more to say. We should put this to a vote and get on with it.

People of Ontario are expecting this. We’ve got to tackle the issues raised in this bill, the climate change issues. It’s important for the province, it’s important for the economy and it’s important for our children and our grandchildren. We need to bring certainty to the business



community and we need to bring certainty to our citizens. It's time to vote on it.

I have no idea why you're spinning out this debate—spinning it out, spinning it out. It wasn't as if there was something interesting or new or constructive that they were saying. It's all baffle-gab. They might as well stand up and recite the poem: How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood? That's the level of the debate that we're hearing after nine hours. They've completely run out of gas. You know what happens when a car runs out of gas? It just stalls. You are stuck—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I just want to say that the minister talking about listening—there were over 100 amendments that they brought, and they accepted absolutely zero of ours. So maybe they could take a little bit of a lesson in listening.

My colleague from Elgin–Middlesex–London, as he always is, was very well prepared. He talked about a cash grab, that this is for the slush fund. That's why they really want to get this bill in, because the meter is running and they need to be able to have something in there. There's no separate account. We can't understand why that would be the case.

He talked a little bit about creative accounting. The Green Energy Act, if we'll recall, was supposed to be a \$40-million program. It turned into a \$1.1-billion boondoggle. I think they actually spun that. It was a seat-saver program.

But don't listen to just me. I'm going to actually talk a little bit about George Vegh, who was in our clippings this morning:

"The energy experience can be drawn upon for some lessons.

"The first lesson is that bad processes lead to bad decisions. The electricity sector had no effective checks and balances. The Minister of Energy could direct billions of dollars of public expenditures with the stroke of a pen. Any new regulatory structure will require clear oversight to prevent or at least reduce imprudent investments.

"Related is the need for greater transparency in decision-making.... This gave consultations the appearance of a façade" in the last go-round.

"Finally, facts matter. Ontario energy decisions were made in a factual vacuum. Supply and conservation were pursued with little regard to system reliability needs, leading to massive surplus and acquiring resources that did not meet demand requirements.... The recent controversy over electricity prices going up as a result of conservation is a case in point." The minister won't even provide details of how much this is going to cost, so there needs to be some clear accountability. "Any new system should have strict cost-benefit requirements so that decisions can be made and evaluated through a straightforward analysis.

"The prospect of a new agency to make decisions around investment in carbon reduction is daunting for

those who fear a repetition of Ontario's previous experience in energy management."

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't say it any better myself.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** To the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, who was just talking about a woodchuck, I say: I slit a sheet, a sheet I slit, whoever slits a sheet is a good sheet slitter.

Now to the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London: He talked about the government's lack of accountability, lack of transparency and lack of trust. He looked at his crystal ball. He predicted rising prices in energy and he predicted loss of jobs. He talked about Greg Sorbara, a former Minister of Finance in the Liberal government, a former campaign manager of many campaigns for the Liberal Party. Mr. Sorbara says that this is "a flow-through tax" that will cost consumers. Now, that's like the truth. We don't hear that a lot around here from the other side, but we hear it from their former ministers. They're pulling the veil, lifting the veil, putting the light under the bushel basket or whatever it is, but now we know what's really going on over there.

It's like the member from Sarnia–Lambton said earlier: If you believe in it so much, you should have run on it. You should have made it a campaign issue, just as you should have made selling Hydro One a campaign issue, but you didn't.

Look, New Democrats believe in a carbon cap-and-trade kind of policy. But it has to be fair, it has to be efficient and it has to be transparent. We've heard that it isn't transparent, it isn't fair and it won't be efficient, because there is no transparency; there is no accountability. The Environmental Commissioner has no say in it. The Auditor General has little to say with it. The Financial Accountability Officer hasn't been invited to the table. They have a lot of explaining to do to the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Elgin–Middlesex–London has up to two minutes to reply, if he chooses to take it.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I won't take two minutes because I know that the dinner bell is ringing.

Thanks to the members from Essex and Windsor–Tecumseh; I appreciate the comments that you made and I just hope you won't be supporting this bill come tomorrow, when we vote on the third reading for this bill.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs: Thank you very much. I don't think that we are having too much baffle-gab here, but we are having a lot of bloviating and prevaricating. I hope that, at the end of the day, we can get through this legislation.

Of course, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, as always, talked about the boondoggles that continually go on on this side of the government. We hope that it changes and, hopefully, at the end of the debate, we see a system—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Yes, I'm going to have to ask the member to withdraw his un-parliamentary remark.



**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

To wrap up: Let's hope, at the end of the day, that this money is utilized correctly, and we don't have a scandal down the road.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1802.*



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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

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Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
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Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
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<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
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<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
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Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
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Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	



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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
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<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
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McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
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Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	



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Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
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Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
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Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe  
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Marie-France Lalonde, Gila Martow  
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Peter Tabuns  
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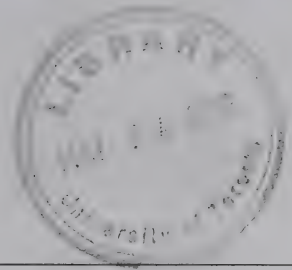
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**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 17 May 2016**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Mardi 17 mai 2016**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 17 May 2016

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 17 mai 2016

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order: the member from London–Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I believe we don't have a quorum, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Quorum?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** A quorum is not present.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call on the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a quorum.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WASTE-FREE ONTARIO ACT, 2016

### LOI DE 2016 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO SANS DÉCHETS

Mrs. Mangat, on behalf of Mr. Murray, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur la récupération des ressources et l'économie circulaire et la Loi transitoire de 2016 sur le réacheminement des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mrs. Mangat.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

I'm pleased to move third reading of Bill 151, the proposed Waste-Free Ontario Act. I would like to remind members of some of the key elements of the bill. If passed, this bill would enact two acts related to reducing waste, increasing resource recovery and replacing existing programs operated under the Waste Diversion Act, 2002. The Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act would make producers accountable in full for recovering resources and reducing waste associated with their products and packaging.

This act would overhaul Waste Diversion Ontario into the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority to

oversee the implementation of a new producer responsibility framework. The authority would be equipped with new powers, new compliance and enforcement tools, and enhanced oversight and accountability.

Further, the proposed act would establish an overarching provincial interest in resource recovery and waste reduction, and enable the government to issue policy statements to support the interest. It would require ministries, municipalities, producers and others to perform waste reduction and resource recovery activities in a manner that is consistent with those policies.

The second act in the bill, the Waste Diversion Transition Act, would ensure that existing waste diversion programs can be smoothly transitioned to a new producer responsibility approach. This would allow Ontarians' access to existing recycling services—including the Blue Box Program—to be continued. Once the transition is complete, the existing industry funding organizations operating those programs would be wound up and the transition act would be repealed.

At public hearings of the Standing Committee on Social Policy in April, we heard broad support from a range of stakeholders, including producers, municipalities, service providers and environmental organizations. They support our commitment to a circular economy and our vision for zero waste and zero greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector. They also support our move to make producers responsible for the products and packaging they put into the marketplace. Stakeholders told us in committee that they would like to see the bill passed so we can move forward with improving resource recovery and waste reduction in the province.

We have heard support for many aspects of the legislative framework, including the provincial interest and policy statements as a means of providing government direction on key matters of resource recovery and waste reduction. Stakeholders also expressed their support for the use of a non-crown body that would oversee the producer responsibility approach. They supported outcome-based resource recovery and waste reduction requirements for producers.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Natalija Fisher from Environmental Defence told the committee that the organization supports the move to encourage producers to take full responsibility for their products and packaging. We also heard from John Coyne from Unilever Canada. Unilever has more than 400 wide-ranging brands. He said that the Waste-Free Ontario Act aligns with their vision of environmental responsibility. He recognized that producers need to play both an operational and a financial role in



ensuring the recovery of materials they place into the marketplace.

There is also broad support for the draft waste-free Ontario strategy, which outlines a road map for the implementation of the bill and shifting Ontario toward a circular economy and a more innovative, zero-waste future. Mr. Speaker, Environmental Defence called the proposed framework “a positive step towards the future of zero waste.” And Richard Lindgren of the Canadian Environmental Law Association said, “Bill 151 should be passed and implemented as soon as possible.”

**0910**

Mr. Speaker, the government has made changes to the proposed legislation in response to what we have heard from stakeholders. Amendments to the bill made at committee will enhance the overarching direction of the legislation, increase accountability and transparency, and enhance the government’s accountability with respect to winding up industry funding organizations. They would also add some time commitments to the bill’s implementation and address some concerns we heard from municipal representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I said that the bill would establish an overarching provincial interest in resource recovery and waste reduction. In response to comments we received in hearings, we have added two aims to the provincial interest: to protect the natural environment and human health, and to foster the continued growth and development of the circular economy.

The bill, as amended in committee, will enhance fairness during the implementation of policy statements by providing an opportunity for those subject to a director’s review of non-compliance to express their opinions before a determination is made. So if a director believes a producer is not consistent with a policy statement based on an initial review, then the producer has an opportunity to provide feedback prior to the director making a final determination.

Amendments to the bill in committee have also defined key terms related to the overarching direction of the legislation, such as “circular economy,” “resource recovery” and “waste reduction.”

This bill, if passed, would increase accountability and transparency. As I mentioned, the bill creates a Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority to oversee the implementation of a new producer responsibility framework. The government was pleased to make amendments to the bill at committee related to the new authority. First, we have enhanced the minister’s ability to require public consultations related to the authority’s objects. Second, we will now require that the authority publish a description on its registry of how it considered public comments in determining fees or charges.

This bill, if passed, would also help the smooth transition of the industry funding organizations. When I say that, it means that once the transition of the existing programs is done, there will be a smooth windup of the industry funding organizations. Under the proposed Waste Diversion Transition Act, the new authority would be

responsible for ensuring a timely transition of existing mandatory industry funding organizations to a full producer responsibility model and would oversee the windup of industry funding organizations.

The bill, as amended at committee, now sets a 90-day timeline for the minister to provide direction to those industry funding organizations to wind up waste diversion programs. The exception will be the Blue Box Program.

Another amendment to the bill at committee will require the authority’s annual report to be laid before the Legislative Assembly, including information regarding the progress on winding up industry funding organizations and programs. And yet another amendment will enhance enforcement tools by making it an offence for an industry funding organization to use its money or assets in ways that are inconsistent with the purposes of the proposed act. This amendment will also allow the new authority to appoint an administrator to take over an industry funding organization if those kinds of things occur.

Mr. Speaker, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario made a presentation to committee about this bill. The committee also heard from three individual municipalities: the regional municipality of Durham, the town of Ingersoll and the city of Toronto. We appreciate municipalities’ interest in the proposed legislation, and we have addressed two key municipal concerns through amendments at committee.

The bill, as amended at committee, now requires mandatory consultations with municipalities at a number of points: for example, in the development of a policy statement; a change to a waste diversion program; a program windup plan; and the operation of waste diversion programs. Amendments made to the bill in committee also provide the minister with the power to change the Blue Box Program for addressing blue box funding issues. This would help resolve an ongoing dispute between municipalities and industry stewards with respect to Blue Box Program payments.

The bill, as amended at committee, adds time commitments relating to implementation of the bill. The bill would now require the Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy to be developed and published within 90 days of the proclamation of the bill, and it would require the minister to begin developing and consulting on the first policy statement within a year of proclamation.

Mr. Speaker, the province needs this legislation. Ontario’s recycling programs, as we all know, have been recognized internationally. Almost all Ontarians—about 95% of our households—have access to the Blue Box Program. In the residential sector, 47% of household waste is diverted from landfill. But the diversion rate for the rest of the economy is much lower. Existing waste diversion programs cover only 15% of Ontario’s waste stream. And over the last decade, our overall waste diversion rate has stalled at 25%. As a result, only three million of the more than 12 million tonnes of waste generated annually in Ontario is recovered. And every year, approximately \$1



billion worth of recoverable materials is lost to landfills across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the 401 West passes through my great riding of Mississauga–Brampton South. Every day, I see waste trucks wheeling down Highway 401 to London, to Green Lane landfill, to dispose of those materials. The question is, how long are those landfills are going to last? Not very long. So we need this Bill 151, which would enable a shift to a circular economy, which would increase resource recovery and waste reduction in Ontario.

0920

Mr. Speaker, this proposed legislation would benefit Ontario households enormously. Under our proposed approach, consumers would continue to have convenient access to recycling such as through the blue box. In fact, we expect the public would be able to recycle more materials than they can today, because producers will be required to meet collection standards for more materials, such as batteries, fluorescent tubes, bulky materials, furniture, mattresses—all that kind of stuff would be recycled.

Bill 151 would make producers responsible for providing customers with clear information about how to manage their end-of-life products and packaging, including drop-off sites. Right now, all of that is done by the municipalities, but if the bill is passed, the responsibility would be shifted to the producer to give clear information, provide education and raise awareness.

Two weeks ago, I received mail at my home about how to dispose of organic materials. All those kinds of things will be done by the producer. This would save municipalities a lot of money. In a more general way, Ontario households would benefit from the proposed legislation because our approach will be good for the environment and the economy.

With respect to environmental benefits, the proposed Waste-Free Ontario Act would help Ontario reach our greenhouse gas reduction targets and achieve the goals in our climate change strategy.

Landfills have an environmental as well as an economic cost. When organic waste and other biodegradable materials such as paper are disposed of in landfills, they begin to break down. What happens then? This creates emissions such as methane, which has a global warming potential 25% more than carbon dioxide.

Greenhouse gas emissions from Ontario's waste increased by 25% between 1990 and 2012, as the amount of waste in Ontario landfills increased. In fact, emissions from the waste sector, including the release of methane from landfills, accounted for 5% of total emissions in Ontario in 2013. Ontario currently avoids adding 2.2 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions to our air every year through our waste diversion programs. This is like taking almost half a million cars off the road each year. With Bill 151 passing, we would be able to further reduce our emissions from waste. Our Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is very passionate about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fighting climate change.

Producers would be responsible for recovering the resources and reducing the waste associated with their products and packaging. This approach would increase accountability for those who have the greatest ability to design long-lasting reusable and easily recyclable products. Recycling uses less energy and produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions than creating products with virgin materials. It also avoids the environmental impact of activities such as the extraction of raw materials.

Bill 151 would benefit taxpayers and our economy. It would shift the cost of recycling to producers, who have the flexibility to find efficient and innovative ways to reduce waste. Once the legislation and the strategy are fully implemented, this would save municipal taxpayers approximately \$150 million a year. At the same time, the bill would boost the economy by creating the conditions to recover more waste materials. That, in turn, would create jobs. Businesses that collect those materials or process those materials and broker recovered waste materials, as well as the companies that manufacture and distribute products made with recovered materials: They stand to benefit from expanding markets.

Studies have shown that Ontario's existing waste diversion programs can create up to 10 times more jobs than waste disposal. One study indicates that diversion of organic waste creates 60% more in GDP than disposal. It is estimated that for every 1,000 tonnes of waste diverted in Ontario, seven jobs are created via the blue box and other diversion programs. Recovering just 60% of waste materials could create almost 13,000 jobs and contribute \$1.5 billion to Ontario's GDP. In addition to creating jobs, increasing waste diversion rates and improving resource recovery will help Ontario businesses stay competitive in the global economy.

Bill 151, as amended at committee, deserves the support of all members in the Legislature. This proposed legislation would help us to divert more materials from landfills. It would increase accountability for those who produce the waste and who have the greatest ability to influence the design of products and packaging. It would also help us reach our greenhouse gas reduction targets and achieve the goals in our climate change strategy.

As I said earlier, our Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is working very hard, day in, day out, and is very passionate about it.

It would boost the economy by creating the conditions to recover more resources, which would in turn create more jobs.

I would like to close by saying that the proposed legislation is good for the environment; it's good for the economy; it's good for the people of Ontario; and it will be good for our children and grandchildren. We will be leaving a healthy planet for our future generations. So I'm looking forward to the speedy passage of this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I turn it back now over to the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to start off by thanking my parliamentary assistant and all of the MPPs who worked so hard in all parties at committee to see this legislation through.



I think the committee process on this bill was rather remarkably constructive and positive. I think you see that because many members of this House will see their fingerprints on some of the amendments on the bill. There was extraordinary consultation across industry, with AMO, with the different industry associations, even with other provinces and with environmental groups.

So it's a very robust piece of legislation. I think it brings a lot of the best thinking in Ontario to what is, predominantly, really more of an economic bill than an environment bill because most of what we're doing on the environment isn't hugging trees or petting small animals; it's not loving nature more, as much as we should. The impacts on nature are really coming from how we manage our waste, how we use energy and how we move. Those are the things that are consequential. The toxins, the pollutions, how we manage our food: These are all the things that we need to look at to solve the problem.

We throw out more garbage than just about any society in the world. Each of us throws out 777 kilograms of garbage every year. There are many modern industrial countries where people throw out less than a half, less than a third, of waste.

0930

Our Blue Box Program—one of the hard things about being the Minister of the Environment is following the member from St. Catharines, who I think was the longest-serving Minister of the Environment. In the 1980s, Minister Bradley introduced blue box programs for the very first time in the world. We sometimes don't realize it.

I think the two things we don't realize Canadians invented are basketball, which with the Raptors I think we recognize more. There's something great about seeing the Toronto Raptors, Canada's basketball team, out there doing so well in the finals because that was a Canadian sport. It was invented by a Canadian. The Americans seem to own it. We only have one professional team in their league, but we're doing darn well.

The other thing, the other basket that Canadians invented was the blue box. Right here in Ontario and right here in this Legislature, the very visionary dean of our Legislature, the Honourable Jim Bradley, did that. It's an example of what we can do, both on climate change and the circular economy.

Ontario is leading globally right now. I was reading the criticisms of the early 1980s, which was the last time the environment took hold in Ontario and Ontario stepped up as a global leader in introducing recycling at scale—a province-wide, economy-wide recycling program. The opposition to it at the time was that it would ruin the economy. We couldn't do it. It was too much change too fast. People would never adapt. How would people ever sort their garbage? It was viewed as impossible.

It was the same time I was reading critiques about the information technology age. People thought people who were suggesting you could have a computer the size of a

file folder were insane. Computers back then were the size of this room. We all went to university; it took up a whole floor of the university. "How could you ever manage a computer?" they said. "Computers need engineers." You know how many technical support people a university has to hire to manage computers today? It was huge numbers of engineers and computer scientists to manage these complex, huge machines, these computers. Well, 10 years later, we were all sitting with laptops the size of file folders, and none of us needed an engineer to manage them in our living room with us. As a matter of fact, we have computers that are more complex than some of the things that would fill half this room. They're the size of a wallet, like our BlackBerries and our iPhones. That all happened in a decade.

I've said this often: The big challenge we have now is coming out of the information technology age where, 10 years ago, if you bought a car, it was a car. Today, if you buy a car, it's a computer. Probably the biggest computer most of us own is our automobiles. We have telematics. We now have computers that can talk to traffic lights that won't even need us to drive them. Within 10 years, UPS and FedEx will be managing their products in autonomous vehicles and those brown vans will probably disappear. When we, on a little app, have a car pick us up, take us to where we want to go and drop us off at our electrified 15-minute GO service, it will also manage all parts of our lives.

We are going through a period where my friend John Polanyi, whom I worked with at U of T, that great Canadian Nobel laureate, was asked—when I was at U of T, he and I were on a panel together. Dr. Polanyi was asked a question by graduate students. They said, "Dr. Polanyi, if you could sum up the age we live in in one word, what would that word be?" He said, "We live in the age of acceleration."

In fact, it is the speed of change that is the greatest challenge for legislators, for policy-makers, for academics, for business leaders, for labourers and for mother nature. As he said, the problem isn't that the climate is changing. The climate has been changing through the whole history of our planet. The problem today is that the speed at which the climate is changing, the hydrological cycle, is changing too fast for nature to adapt to it. What used to take a million years or 10,000 years to happen is happening in five years or 10 years. Species aren't coping, and we're losing a lot of the biodiversity on which we as human beings depend.

That's hard for us because we're using market mechanisms, whether it's cap-and-trade or, in the case of this bill, extended producer responsibility. We're not regulating in the way we used to. I don't think this is new news. The member for Huron-Bruce, whom I have a lot of respect for, I think understands that. She comes from an agricultural community.

I was out on a few farms in the last few months. You go onto a combine now and they have a computer. You don't even drive it. We talk in the city like we discovered autonomous vehicles. Farmers have had autonomous



vehicles for a long time. They don't just pick you up and drop you off at work. They plant. They put the pesticides, the nutrients, down. They completely manage—acres of farms that used to take 100 people to manage are now one person with a combine that's entirely automated. They have a computer on it that's smarter than anything you'd find in a Tesla, that actually tells you the whole history of how they're managing their farm.

As a matter of fact, I would say that agriculture, more than any other industry in Ontario, has seized the opportunity of the high-tech, electronic, computerized economy. If every industry in Ontario could do what agriculture has done in the last 20 years in precision farming and automation, we would have one of the highest-productivity economies in the world.

Many of us who live in cities don't fully appreciate how much work goes on on a farm. My family had a dairy farm in eastern Ontario, in Alexandria. I remember that my dad got involved in it with one of his best friends. We moved onto the farm and set the kids up. We were hand-milking cows. I was great as a city kid because I was shooting groundhogs because they broke the cow's legs and I learned how to milk. One of the reasons my dad got involved—he took an equity position in the farm with great friends of ours to this day, and they bought all the milking equipment that automated that. I've been back to that farm since. The cows go into the stall and the whole machinery comes up. I thought my sound system and my flat-screen TV were advanced technologies; look at how they milk a cow today, Mr. Speaker.

I actually think, as we face food security issues and with the changing climate and the disruption of spring, where strawberries come out in BC in January, which they shouldn't, and die—and we had five metres of snow on the streets of Halifax last June. That's not the kind of spring or weather we've ever known, and those anomalies are going to become more frequent.

We only have to look to Ontarians about how we manage all of this huge change. Whether it's the laptops or whether it's precision farming, we know how to do these things. But it's time to step up on climate change and manage the disruptive risk.

The way we heat our homes is going to be totally different in 10 years. Our homes right now are becoming more waste-free because—the two pieces of legislation before this House right now, Bills 172 and 151, are linked. While we each throw out 777 kilograms of waste, we also emit 12 tonnes of greenhouse gases each, and those two things are linked. It's estimated that we'd need about nine planet earths for people if everyone lived in the world the way that Canadians and Americans live—nine planets. There's a direct relationship between these two bills. We have to become a more efficient economy. We have to learn what farmers already know, which is that you manage your resources with less inputs for more outputs. That's how we're going to solve the problem of greenhouse gases and that's how we're going to become a waste-free economy.

Mr. Speaker, historically—and we are in a historic time—these two bills, Bills 151 and 172, which are linked—someone is going to write a history book 10 or 20 years from now and they're going to look at all 107 of us. We're setting Ontario on a course to be carbon-neutral by the middle of the century. We will actually have a low-carbon economy in which we don't emit carbon-polluting gases. We're playing a leadership role in that. Linked to that, we'll be a waste-free economy. We'll have a circular economy. This is good for the economy.

What do we mean by a circular economy? China is looking at a circular economy. Britain is looking at a circular economy, and France. They all have bills that are called “circular economy.” In a sense, what we're trying to change is what was often described as the “take, make, use and throw away” approach, or what's called the linear economy, where you make something and you design it for the dump. We're trying to change, right at the front end, that we no longer design things for the dump. We design them to be carbon-neutral; we design them to be durable.

If you take a glass of water, Mr. Speaker, from a tap in your home, from a very good municipal water system, it uses very little energy. If you take that same amount of water from a plastic bottle, 40% of the content of that plastic bottle, in oil, is how much energy it took to put water and to extract it and to distribute it. In other words, 500 millilitres of water out of a plastic bottle takes 2,000 times as much energy as taking that same water from a glass out of your tap. Most of us don't stop to think about how much energy, how much material, we waste simply in that choice.

0940

When you talk to your parents and your grandparents, for generations, all of us got our water out of a tap. My friend, my parliamentary assistant, Mrs. Mangat—it's rather remarkable—we talked about how all of our families came from countries where you can't drink the water. You go back to most of our parents who immigrated from countries, and the vast majority of them came from countries where you can't drink the water.

Here, we have a perfectly good system which is very efficient on energy. There's no waste product. You don't have to throw a plastic water bottle out. You don't have any recycling. You don't have any waste. There's a lot of these simple things that everyone else did and that we used to do. We use eight times as much energy as our great-grandparents, four times as much as our grandparents and twice as much as our parents. We can't keep on doubling that large amount of energy. That is consequential to the waste that we have, and it's consequential to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. We sometimes don't realize that most of the things that we're going to do as people to make our lives better and healthier are the same.

So what does this do, Mr. Speaker? Well, we know we're facing a growing demand for goods across the planet. Every generation is consuming more things, and



there are more of us. Global competition is intensifying. China is making a range of products that they never made before. Prior to the Second World War, China was about 5% of the world's GDP; now it's 25% of the world's GDP. They're making electric vehicles. They're moving now to a waste-free society as well.

We know, as I said, that we're using nine planets right now. We have got to get back to using one. That's unsustainable. We also know that we need to save valuable and scarce resources. We need to cut GHG emissions and we need to make the economy more efficient, more productive, more sustainable and more competitive.

We know that a resource recovery economy, a recycling economy, employs thousands more people than an economy that wastes money. We know from what many economists have said—Roger Martin, the dean of the Rotman school, recently retired from there and now working internationally in the business community, points out that we've always had, for a couple of decades now, since probably the 1970s, a 25% productivity gap with the United States. That means that the US economy makes 25% more goods with the same amount of resources, energy and labour than we do.

We also know that if we could close that gap, you and I and the average Ontarian would have \$7,000 more disposable income, if we had the same level of productivity as the US economy. Kevin Lynch has written extensively on this in the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail*, about the need to close the productivity gap. John Manley and the Canadian Council of Chief Executive Officers have taken this challenge of productivity.

One of the big areas in which we need to look at productivity is in natural resources. Our natural resource capital is being wasted. We excessively drain resources. We throw too much stuff out. We don't recover enough of our materials. One of the best examples: Rio Tinto has a major smelter, an aluminum smelter, in Canada. Our aluminum cans are ubiquitous around this place. You see them everywhere. Who hasn't had a Diet Coke or Coke Zero or a Pepsi or something like that?

That aluminum is rather remarkable material. It can be used forever. It can be used in perpetuity. It never breaks down. You can refine it, reprocess it or keep it. All of those aluminum cans are quite a remarkable material.

To mine aluminum is difficult. You need alum and you need bauxite; bauxite usually comes from Jamaica. You have to extract all these resources from around the world, assemble them, ship them, refine them, distribute them, and then most of them in Ontario, even though it's our most high-value recyclable, recoverable material—we still have too much of that material ending up in the waste stream.

But we now have enough aluminum in Canada that we could run our smelters here entirely on the aluminum in our waste and recycling stream. So we would never actually ever have to extract alum or bauxite again. We sort of have—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** From Jamaica. When I was with the Canadian Urban Institute we had a team who

worked in Jamaica in the area where bauxite was being mined. There's a lot of work recovering the environment down there once the bauxite was removed.

It's a big, challenging, messy kind of thing. But if we could switch, which I'm hoping this bill will do, and if by working with Quebec, who are also doing some work, we could just recover that aluminum that is currently in our waste stream and our recycling stream and assemble it and put it as an input into the aluminum smelter, that aluminum smelter in Quebec, for example—or steel mills here, three of which already work on 100% recovered materials—would be able to make aluminum from recovered resources with 5% of the amount of energy that it takes to make an aluminum can out of virgin resources.

Let's just keep that in our head for a second: An aluminum can made from virgin resources, extracted resources, is energy intensive. We've already extracted more than enough alumina and bauxite to not have to extract it. In perpetuity, we could have all of the aluminum cans that we use being made out of recovered resources, and we would only use 5% of the energy.

Some people say, if you want to understand the tie-in between Bill 172 and Bill 151, the climate change and cap-and-trade bill and the waste-free Ontario bill—the two mechanisms, a carbon market and auction and extended producer responsibility, where the people who make things are responsible for the end-life of their products—you find it in the aluminum can. These two bills, working together, will incent businesses not to use as much energy and not to pollute. By recovering aluminum, it means that we could have our aluminum, as much as we need for as long as we want, but we make it with having to extract absolutely no new resources, and we process it using only 5% of the energy that we're using now.

When I go back to that gap with the United States—if you want to understand the productivity gap, what this 25% is all about—it's basically that we're going to be making aluminum with so little energy, so few resources and no virgin resources that we're going to be making the same number of aluminum cans with a small fraction of the amount of resources, energy and labour time than we used to, so it's much more efficient. It's a high-productivity plant when you have an aluminum plant that works only on recovered material. That is how you close the productivity gap; it's not by asking Ontarians to work harder.

I'm very proud of our steel industry here in Ontario. I talked about farmers having understood productivity and minimum waste, because most farms internalize that. I was at the Whale's farm in southwestern Ontario; I saw their biodigester. They have a 100% recovery kind of thing. Deb Whale is a rather remarkable woman. Her son Tyler heads up the agricultural technology group. We're doing work with them right now on zero-waste, low-carbon technologies. They understand the synergies of this. But the other sector in Ontario that really gets the waste minimization is our steel industry. Do you realize



that we have three steel mills here that are already working on 100% recovered steel? Three steel mills in Ontario do not extract a gram of ore to make their steel product. Why? Because they recover used cars; they work with the car scrappage and recovery institutes—that's a sector that's doing amazing work. So we're already getting in Ontario to some sort of, what I would call, economic environmental equilibrium in resources, where you recognize that you've got enough material—whether it's steel, iron or aluminum—already in your economy that you could just work on recovering and harvesting it.

These countries that have circular economies—cradle to cradle, as it's often called—means that you don't put something into the economy that you're not prepared to take back out, repurpose and reuse, and to recover at least the energy and, wherever you can, the materials. If these two bills, which will have to have some sort of reciprocity in the way that we implement them over the next 30 years, because this is a 30-year exercise—we'll see more recovery. We'll see biogas coming from methane helping to heat our homes and driving our large vehicles. That's recovering a gas from a waste stream.

There's a few people that I want to give a shout-out to. Unilever was mentioned before by my parliamentary assistant. Paul Polman is—if you want to understand a company that totally gets the ultra-low-carbon economy as well as the circular economy, Unilever is a waste-free company. You may remember them; they were last discussed in the House when my friend from Ottawa—Orléans introduced a private member's bill on plastic microbeads. She was saying to me that it's kind of exciting to see corporate leadership out ahead of government. She pointed out that Unilever had already removed, last year, all of the plastic microbeads from that, so they're not going into the lake.

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They're already on zero waste. Unilever is actually a zero-waste company globally, one of the largest multinational companies—zero waste. I sit with Paul Polman on the World Bank's Carbon Pricing Leadership group. They're working to be one of the first companies that will be carbon-neutral. It's a remarkable company.

We're very blessed to have people like John Coyne, who works on the minister's advisory working group on climate change and has also been a key person on waste. He was one of the people who presented to the committee. One of the members opposite asked why we're talking about Bills 151 and 172 together. He actually said that to the committee. He said, "You've got to understand that when you link these things, for our company and all the consumer products we make, if we make it with zero waste, it's pretty hard for us not to have zero carbon emissions." It's very hard to have a zero-waste plant that isn't a zero-carbon-dioxide plant. He said, "As Unilever is now moving to zero carbon, one of the best strengths we have is found in Bill 151. Because we're a zero-waste company, we're finding it very easy to be a zero-carbon company."

I think this is kind of a historic moment. I always said that in the last century, one of the most important things

that happened—and to give credit to the party opposite, Bill Davis was education minister. When I became Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, I had the chance to have supper with him and seek out his advice. He's a really brilliant man. He told me—maybe it was one of my staff who found it later, but I think the headline in one of the largest daily papers in Canada after he announced the college system was "Universities for Dumb People." That's what they called his idea for colleges.

As my friend David Crombie says—people always talk about Bill Davis and David Crombie from the 1970s as if they were gods, like they did nothing wrong. They're two of my favourite political leaders, Mr. Speaker. They both reminded me that when Bill Davis put the height restrictions on the St. Lawrence market area, the development community was up in arms, saying that the world was going to end and that kind of thing, but he persevered. One of the reasons we love Toronto so much is because of the development patterns that were so controversial at the time. David Crombie wasn't very popular when he did them, nor was John Sewell, but we ended up with a city that's so much more livable because we didn't have the Spadina Expressway and we had to-scale human development.

One of the reasons we had such a successful economy in the last 50 years was because the Conservative government introduced, in 1967, Centennial College. That was a visionary legacy of that time in Ontario. Had Bill Davis and Premier Frost and Premier Robarts not introduced colleges at the time, we would not have the high-skill workforce. Everyone who looks back at the success of the Ontario manufacturing economy will tell you that, starting with Centennial College in 1967, the government of the day of John Robarts and Minister Bill Davis introduced the biggest changes to the education system to skill us for this highly challenging new workforce and the rapid change that was about to come to our manufacturing sector. Ontario thrived, based on the strength of its workforce, the same way we have seen the massive investments that we're making in public school systems: increasing graduation rates in high schools, up from 68% to 83%; and free tuition in our budget. This is an amazing legacy. But if we didn't have the colleges or the great university system that we inherited from governments of the last century, we wouldn't be able to build this opportunity for Ontarians today.

Mr. Speaker, I do think that if we can rise above petty politics and recognize these extraordinary accomplishments, regardless of whether it was done by a Liberal, a Conservative or a New Democratic government, those were the moments in which Premiers and ministers took on incredible controversy. They didn't have to deal with social media, thank God, because God knows that's a whole new level of personal insults I've never experienced before. But they had humour.

In the end, Mr. Speaker, we respect those people even though they were controversial in their day. No one can even remember who the critics were, the people who said



that our colleges were universities for dumb people. They're not; they turned out to be one of the most inspired and brilliant policy moves that we ever did. We just remember that. Those people will tell you how controversial it was; how personal, sometimes, the attacks were; how raucous it was in this House. Sometimes my party was in opposition. I wish we had been kinder and gentler. I'm sure even the opposition party sometimes, in hindsight, has attacked good ideas on this side.

I remember Greg Sorbara saying to me when he left, "One thing I wish I had done differently in my time here is I wish I had been a little less partisan and a little kinder and gentler sometimes." That's the kind of grace and generosity that Greg Sorbara has. He's such a gentleman, such a great public policy mind and such a great leader. We owe him, on our side of the House, a great legacy for his time in finance here, getting us back to balance and stuff.

These are important bills. I could go on about the details in them, but they're trying to move us into a direction where our children and our grandchildren will be living in an Ontario with a healthy boreal forest, with strong, robust farming practices, with beautiful cities. That will happen because by 2050 or thereabouts, we will be a carbon-neutral economy. We will not be emitting polluting greenhouse gas emissions because of Bill 172 and because of this bill we're debating today. Understanding the linkages between these two pieces of legislation, we will be a waste-free society. We will be down to net zero kilograms of garbage. When you're at 777, the most in the world, that's a big challenge over 30 years, for us to live without creating waste. There are so many societies in the world that are already closer to that.

When people say, "Is this going to be hard in the next five or 10 years?", it's not going to be easy, but when you're already throwing out more garbage than just about everyone else in the world—we've got to have more low-hanging fruit in that area than just about anyone else. It should be easier for us to knock off the first 10, 20 or 30 kilograms per person. It should be easy because that will help us. This is going to be a major part of also reducing greenhouse gases.

It's going to make us more productive. Whether it's the steel industry or the auto sector—General Motors now is a zero-waste economy. We sometimes don't think about some of the other things as being part of a circular and zero-waste economy. Mr. Speaker, you drive a car. I ride my bike. I use an auto-share service when I need one. Having been a parent, I know how important it is to have a vehicle. When I had kids at home I was rushing around, living in a neighbourhood that didn't lend itself to transit, didn't have the kinds of transit services. It was hard being a parent, and I needed a car. But now, my partner and I don't need a car. We thought, "Well, those of us who don't need to drive, who can walk and cycle, ought not to drive so that that carbon budget can be used by families that actually need it."

The Minister of Transportation, the member from Vaughan, is providing visionary leadership on transpor-

tation. He talks about autonomous vehicles. We talked about productivity. That's going to help reduce our waste and reduce our emissions. Vehicles are going to become durable goods that you'll buy as a service. You can own your own car if you want, but you won't have to, the same way many of us use an auto-share program. That car will not be stored 20 hours a day to be driven for two. That car is going to be more productive. It's not very productive to own an expensive vehicle when you only use it for two hours a day.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** But it feels good.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It does feel good. I used to have a little Miata sports car for five years. I bought it when I turned 50. It was my mid-life crisis. It was a two-seater. As the driver said to me when he sold it to me, it's more efficient than a Toyota Prius on fuel and it has lower emissions. It was my guilty pleasure for three years. That little leased Miata MX-5 was my mid-life crisis.

I have a total love for automobiles. There are days when I walk by my parking spot and see the ghost of my little sports car there, and look at my bicycle and realize that at 58 years old, I'm never going to get the speed on my two-wheel bike that I got on my little four-wheel Miata.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Your bike is better.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** But my bike is better. I'm finally losing that weight I put on at the end of last year, thanks to my bicycle.

This idea of what the Minister of Transportation is talking about is really a productivity gain in a lower-waste economy. It's interesting: General Motors now has taken the Chevy Bolt in California and made it into an autonomous car, so it's an electric, autonomous car. They've got a deal with Lyft, which is Uber in California. It's a really cool program. These cars run all day. They run non-stop. They don't emit any carbon. It's 100% productivity.

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The vehicle is working all the time, delivering parcels, picking up people. It runs off apps. That already exists in California, and it was our great General Motors working with a great company called Lyft to do that. That's a lot more productive use. All that metal, all the resources that were extracted, rather than just being used two hours a day, 365 days a year, is now used 24 hours a day or 22 hours a day. It's very productive use. It's more productive use of our roads, with less resources. The car is more efficiently used. If the car is working all that time, it means fewer people have to own cars, if there's a car that's shared.

That car is designed as modular, so it doesn't end up in the dump. Those autonomous vehicles are designed to last forever. They've changed it from a consumer product that you buy into a service that you use, so they design it to switch out parts. It's a little different when the car company owns the car and sells you the service: They want that vehicle to last as long as possible and be easy to update.



Most of us buy consumer products. What is it, iPhone 6 or 7 or 8 now? There's a new iPhone every year. Why? The style changes so that you'll get rid of your old iPhone and buy a new one.

One of the things this bill is doing is it's moving us towards designing for durability from designing for the dump. We want to have cars that last forever. If we lease the car from a service, the person who owns it wants it to last forever.

This is a bold, big new vision. This is the transformation of our economy to a more competitive economy, to a more productive economy and to a better use of resources and a livable planet.

Mr. Speaker, using resource efficiency is important to our kids. It's important to our sense of well-being.

Our boreal forests will, no matter what, be four to eight degrees Celsius warmer over the next 30 years. If you look at the work of Dr. Griffith from NASA or our own Dr. Dennis Murray from Trent University, we know it's going to be very hard for that forest to maintain its health and not become a carbon source, and we have to maintain that as a carbon sink.

These bills today are about preserving our natural resources, using them more efficiently and keeping our planet healthy and livable.

I want to conclude by saying, with some generosity—I want to thank the member for Huron–Bruce and her party, and the member for Toronto–Danforth and his party. They contributed significantly to this bill. It's a better bill because of the opposition. While we all tend to be partisan in here, I want to thank both of the opposition parties because I think they raised this above partisan politics. Bill 151 is a good bill not only because of the Liberals but because of the Conservatives and New Democrats in this House. I want to thank them very much for their thoughtfulness and for the generosity of their ideas. Kudos to them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to dedicate this bill to my grandson, little Michael, who lives in Calgary, who is six years old. My son, as you know, struggled with fetal alcohol syndrome. He taught me everything I know. A lot of us have raised children that are extremely disadvantaged. My son, if you've seen some of the films about him, is a brilliant, transformational young man who grew up with incredibly difficult circumstances and struggles. When I think about Bill 151 and Bill 171, I think about my grandson. When he's my age, or 40, I want him to live on a planet that's beautiful and healthy. If we don't pass these kinds of bills and implement them with passion, we won't leave him a stronger economy and a healthy planet. So to my little grandson, Michael, I'd like to dedicate this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to add my voice to the debate this morning.

It's touching when you dedicate something to people who matter to you, and I very much appreciate that.

We did have an interesting committee process in working through Bill 152—151, pardon me. I have Bill

152 on my mind—a great bill that will be spoken about later by the member from Leeds–Grenville. But in the spirit of Bill 151, I have to thank the stakeholders and the committee members for working through and making Bill 151 stronger. I appreciate all the efforts from the member from Mississauga–Brampton South. I enjoy working with her. I think we did a really good job, I must say. To the minister: You should be proud of your parliamentary assistant.

I do think this is a good bill for Ontario. Bill 151, we've all agreed, is a great improvement over Bill 91, because it embraced a lot of the constructive feedback that we brought forward after Bill 91 died on the floor.

I'd be remiss if I didn't take a moment to reflect on a couple of things that the minister said during his part of the debate. He talked about how agriculture has embraced technology and how precision farming is what reflects 2016 farming practices. Something really stuck with me: Farmers are now using much less inputs for greater outputs. I just wish the minister would have realized that before he put a ban on neonics, because that's a technology that is very much a reduction of a particular input that results in greater output.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** In response to the speech by the minister, I just want to put the following comment on the record: Of course we support the legislation, and it is definitely a step forward in the right direction; no question about that. But I find there's this underlying tone from the government benches when it comes to talking about initiatives such as this, as if nothing ever happened in the world, nothing ever happened in Ontario, nothing ever happened in Canada prior to them taking over the government benches on any of these issues. It's almost as if they see themselves as the only ones who have ever done anything on the environment, ever done anything positive when it comes to the economy, and it's just like: If it wasn't for them, my God, the world would just fall apart.

Well, I can spend the next hour talking about the initiatives the government has put together that, quite frankly, have been a disaster, such as their energy policy.

I think a little bit more humility on the government benches and a recognition for the work that was done up to now on the part of other governments before—Liberal, Conservative and New Democrat—who have had to face issues when they were in power and have brought forward initiatives that dealt with a number of issues at the time that needed to be dealt with. Certainly, we can improve on those, because at the time they were done, technologies were different, people's attitudes were different, and the understanding of the issue itself overall was different. But in the end, those governments did take action.

I somewhat resent the tone that comes, as if, "If it wasn't for us, none of this would happen and the world is going to be a better place tomorrow." Well, I'm sorry. Yes, that might be true when it comes to some initiatives



that we're working on today that are certainly moving the yardsticks forward, but we need to take into account and we need to respect the members that were here before, on all sides of the House, who have worked on a number of these issues and have brought forward very good initiatives that are still in place today, and that we certainly work to improve on.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'd like to thank the parliamentary assistant, the member from Mississauga–Brampton South, and also the minister of global warming and the environment.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** The minister of global warming?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Yes, member of global warming.

Anyway, I just want to say that I know there has been a lot of good reference to all these wonderful elected officials, Bill Davis and company, but we sometimes forget the contributions ordinary Ontarians make to sustainable living; that is, the ordinary working people who, in many cases, don't even use a blue box because, believe it or not, they don't buy anything in cans. They don't buy pizza in a box. They have nothing in the blue box because they buy fresh all the time. They plant their own gardens. They use the same bottles over and over again to make their wine. And they actually don't buy a new car every year. They drive Ford Rangers for 10, 20 or 30 years.

These are the people who are environmental leaders out there. They're in all our communities, but they're never consulted in terms of: How do you live without buying pizza in a box? How do you live without buying food in a can or big boxes of Kellogg's Corn Flakes? How can you live without those big boxes of Lucky Charms? But they do. Somehow they survive. Those are the people who are forgotten when we talk about shaping the future. Let's consult with them. Nobody usually does because we consult with all the gurus, and we've got to talk to the gurus or else we're in deep trouble. But we have to consult with the ordinary folks who, believe it or not, don't even use a blue box. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I looked up in the Speaker's gallery and saw my friend, former MPP Peter Shurman. I want to welcome the Shurmanator to Queen's Park today.

I just want to reiterate some of the things that my colleague from Huron–Bruce said about Bill 151. I think we can be proud, as legislators, that we had a bill, Bill 91, that the member for Kitchener–Conestoga did a bit of a filibuster on because he was very concerned about that bill.

Let's think about some of the complaints we have as MPPs about the way the government time-allocates a bill or programs a bill or invokes closure on a bill. We can look at Bill 151 as a great opportunity for all parties to work together in a collaborative way. I want to say to the minister that it's very touching that you mention your

grandson when you talk about this bill. I think there's tremendous buy-in—and I said this at second reading—with our young people about this bill and about this concept of having a waste-free Ontario.

As the member has said many times, we're both former mayors. I remember in the 1980s when we had this move towards a Blue Box Program: There was tremendous buy-in. I think what we can do, after this bill passes, is that all parties should pledge—and I say this many times: that we should work on the education side. We've now done the legislative side; now we need to do the education side. We really need to work with all the partners, both in industry and our municipalities, to get this right.

We've had some great opportunities. The member told me there was great co-operation at committee. We need to build upon that co-operation with this bill. I think we can really have some success with Bill 151. I'm glad our party is now supporting it. We weren't supportive of some of the other incarnations of the bill, but let's move forward after third reading and proclamation to make this bill work in our local communities.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the Minister of the Environment for a final comment.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank my colleagues: the member for Eglinton–Lawrence, the member for Timmins–James Bay, the member for Leeds–Grenville and my critic, the member for Huron–Bruce. Did I miss anybody? I don't think so.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Give a shout-out to Pottsie, too.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Oh, and a shout-out to the member for Beaches–East York because he's just fabulous.

I want to say something—I apologize to the member for Timmins–James Bay. I thought I spent considerable time talking about some of the great moments of parties opposite. I actually had breakfast this morning with the former leader of his party. We were working together and seeking out his advice on a number of issues with the indigenous community and some of the things there. Certainly that party, in power, did a lot.

I pride myself on two things. I've rolled up an extraordinary number of private members' bills into legislation from members opposite and given them credit for it. I think I've recognized the contributions of opposition parties today.

I always take my House time on Thursday afternoon, Mr. Speaker, as you know, because it's the least partisan thing. We have enough real things to debate without it being personal or attacking each other. We are not taking natural gas out of people's homes; that is just disturbing to people. We will be offering geothermal programs. There are all kinds of things that are just not true, and we're all guilty of it. We all exaggerate the positions of others because, quite frankly, most people's ideas in this House are quite practical and reasonable, and we have to distort them for partisan reasons.

The member for Huron–Bruce: I want to thank her. She was very generous in her comments. Thank you very much.



When we go back to a day when this place was less partisan, we get more done. We create more hope and less fear and less anxiety. The more we respect each other and focus on ideas, the more people will respect us.

I thank the opposition parties, my colleagues, the many Ontarians who worked so hard to make this bill a better bill because I think this was an example of us, as legislators, at our best. Thank you very much, and God bless.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Since it is now close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to introduce to you and, through you, to members of the Legislative Assembly a constituent from my riding of Leeds–Grenville, Carol Anne Brandow, who's here for the debate today and for our opposition day motion. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to welcome Linda Walsh and Terry Storr, who are the aunt and uncle of today's page captain, Leah Walsh.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'd like to welcome Brayden Darroch from Doon Public School in Kitchener to the chamber today. Welcome to your first day at Queen's Park.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I would like to bring greetings and to welcome, on behalf of my colleague the Associate Minister of Finance—the page captain today is Marthangi Vicknarajah. His mother and father are both here. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I would like to welcome today to the gallery Kristen Ellison from Cobourg, the mother of an autistic child who is joining us for the debate and the oppo day motion today.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to welcome Carly Pettinger from my riding and office—first time at Queen's Park. Welcome, Carly.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to welcome Robin Etherington, who is the executive director of the Bytown Museum in my community of Ottawa Centre; and also Diana Carter, who is the executive director of the Ottawa Museum Network. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'd like to welcome a couple of boys from the Bruce to the House today: Todd Thompson and Karl Heinisch are here from Ripley.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I would like to welcome a good friend of mine, Brian Dunlevy. He's in the members' east gallery today.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to introduce Megan Barkey, a grade 10 student who lives in Cannington in my riding. She is here doing job shadowing for career day. She is also a former page in the Legislature.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm pleased today to welcome, once again, some families who are here for autism. We have Bruce McIntosh, Laura McIntosh, Nancy Mar-

chese, Kristen Ellison, Sharon Gabison, Nancy Warren and Shiri Bartman. Welcome again to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'd like to welcome the Ontario Museum Association president, Clark Bernat, and the executive director, Marie Lalonde. The OMA is here today meeting with MPPs for museum day here at Queen's Park. They'll have a reception here at Queen's Park right after question period in rooms 228 and 230. All members are welcome.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'd like to welcome Mukund Purohit, who I had the pleasure of meeting on our trip to India, and his family, who are here in the members' west gallery. He's the head of the Gujarati Business Association. I would like to welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would like to give a big welcome to the students from York Memorial Collegiate from the great riding of York South–Weston. They are here today accompanied by their teacher, Christina Ostermann.

I'd also like to mention that our Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn, is a graduate of York Memorial.

Welcome.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Our page Samantha McPherson is doing a great job here representing Wellington–Halton Hills. Her grandparents Joanne and Bill Whittaker are here in the public gallery with us this morning. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I am happy to welcome three members from the Ontario Museum Association who I met with this morning: Braden Murray from Kenora, who works at the Lake of the Woods Museum; Heather Anderson from Toronto, who works at the Ontario Historical Society; and Mike Delfre from Sault Ste. Marie, who is with the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to introduce the class from St. Matthew school in Oakville. The grade 5 class is here today to visit us at Queen's Park. Please give them a warm Queen's Park welcome.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'd like to welcome Laura Kirby-McIntosh, one of my constituents, who is here today to tell everybody that autism does not end at five.

Also, just to show you, Mr. Speaker, that I do learn—it takes me time, but I do eventually learn—I'm not going to say the name of my predecessor who is up in the Speaker's gallery.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Half marks for that one.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm pleased to welcome, from Portia Learning Centre, providing IBI therapy, Robyn Golding, Mandy Noel and Brittney Pike here to the Legislature, and also to welcome my friend Chris Steele and his friend Angelina Palmisano.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It is my pleasure to welcome and introduce a number of families. Stephanie Ridley, Stan Byma, Ross Maclean, Gary Burbridge, Dallis Nimmo, Richelle Parker, Kristen Ellison, Steven Sherwood, Kelly McDowell, Diana Rojas, Ailen and Jose Salazar, Samantha Billings, and Bruce and Laura McIntosh. Thank you for joining us today.



**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Also here for our autism opposition day are Jenn Masanovich, Dennis Madge, Rachelle MacKay Parker, Rebecca Haight and also Kristen Ellison.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In the Speaker's gallery today, we have a former member: Peter Shurman, the MPP for Thornhill in the 39th and 40th Parliaments.

Accompanying Peter are two guests of mine. Visiting from Brantford are Ron Gee and Tom Lepera from Slacan. Thank you for being here.

Finally, we welcome the friends of my oldest brother—my brother Pat and his wife Ida, and his friends Fred and Heike Sphor. Welcome.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think I heard members say, "Was he younger?" Boy, that's not a good way to start.

**Interjection:** Go right to warnings.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I might go right to warnings.

It's now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Acting Premier.

I met with some amazing nurses and staff when I toured the Brampton Civic Hospital on the weekend. I got to see some of the amazing work they do as I toured the hospital.

But as I walked the halls, something stood out to me, and it was no fault of the incredible staff at the hospital: I was shocked when I counted 33 beds in the hallways of the hospital. I don't recall anything in the government's radio ads—self-congratulatory vanity ads—about keeping patients in the hallway.

Mr. Speaker, how can this government let the most vulnerable and sick wait on stretchers in the hallways of our hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I just want to remind the Leader of the Opposition that he actually voted against a budget that added \$1 billion to health care, including—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Carry on, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** He voted against a budget that added \$1 billion to health care spending, including a \$385-million—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Durham, come to order. You can sit and try to hide somewhere else; I am still going to get you.

Finish, please.

1040

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, not only did they vote against a billion more dollars going into health care, they ran on a platform to fire 100,000 people, many of whom would be people working in health care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, again to the Acting Premier: No one is buying the government's spin that they're not cutting health care. Visit any hospital in Ontario and you see nurses fired. You see doctors irate with the government. You can't find a health care worker in the province of Ontario who supports this government.

Let me share with you some stats. The Brampton Civic Hospital sees over 140,000 ER visits per year but was built for a capacity of 90,000 ER visits per year. Beds in hospital hallways should never be the norm in Ontario but is the norm under this Liberal government. The patients of Brampton and Peel region deserve more from their government.

Will this government commit that the Brampton Civic Hospital will have the resources they need to not be permanently over 100% capacity?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'd be interested to know whether the Leader of the Opposition mentioned when he was at Brampton Civic Hospital that he voted against the \$8.2 million in new funding to that hospital this year. Did you talk about why you voted against a \$1-billion input? Did he mention why he voted against a \$1-billion addition to health care?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're inches away from warnings. We're going to start right away, so let's not get there, please.

Finish.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** There has been a 97% increase in funding to that hospital—that's almost double—since we were elected in 2003. We have come a long way but there is still work to do. But I don't think this member can teach us any lessons about how to spend health care dollars.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, sometimes I can't believe this government can keep a straight face while saying that they're actually putting money into health care, because they're not. Visit any hospital in Ontario. Talk to any nurse. Talk to any physician and they all say the same thing. This is a government that's cutting, cutting, cutting and hurting patients in the province of Ontario.

Let's speak about some more facts about the government's cuts to health care in Brampton. Because of this government's cut to physicians, there was a multi-specialty clinic in Brampton that just laid off five staff, affecting 2,000 patients. There were two family doctors who just announced in Brampton that they have to cut 14 hours of their clinic because of this government's cuts. That affected another 2,000 patients.

How many more patients in Brampton are going to have to suffer because of this government's heartless cuts to health care?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** When we took office in 2003, we had the worst wait times in the country. We now have the shortest wait times in the country. Our investments in health care are paying off for patients. We have 94% of people now with a family doctor. We have 26,000 more nurses working in Ontario than we did when you were in charge of the system. You compared nurses to hula hoop workers.

Let's just remind ourselves that we're approaching the two-year anniversary of the announcement in Barrie that the Conservative Party would cut 100,000 workers. Who was there standing with the Leader of the Opposition? None other than the federal MP at the time, the MP who stood by Stephen Harper—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, since I can't get an answer on the health cuts and the cuts to patients, let's talk about something else. I want to ask the Acting Premier about the autism cuts.

I want to share the story of four-year-old Mason, who lives in Burlington. He has been waiting for IBI therapy and has moderate to severe autism. He is non-verbal and has trouble socially. He only eats five foods, and none of them have much nutritional value. His family recently received a letter saying he will no longer qualify for IBI from the same group that just weeks ago said he desperately needs that very same treatment.

This is what the mum had to say: "We already spend thousands [of dollars] a year on" social programs and camps. She said they "will have to sell their home in Burlington to provide a fraction of the IBI" treatment "that Mason needs."

My question is: How can this government do this? How can this government abandon Mason?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I have to say, Speaker, that it is kids like Mason who have driven us to make important changes to our autism program. We are adding 16,000 spaces so that 16,000 kids like Mason will have access to the care they need more quickly. We will cut wait times in half. We are making a historic investment in new funding so more kids like Mason can get what they need when they need it.

We acknowledge that we're in a transition period. We know that it's difficult for families, and that's why we urge families to talk to their service providers about what this means for their individual kids. But 16,000 more kids getting the treatment they need for autism is, I think, something that should be applauded by all in this House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Acting Premier: I'm not sure what alternate universe this government lives in, but to say they're doing it for Mason when they kicked him off the IBI wait-list is unbelievable.

Let me give you another example, Mr. Speaker. Let me share with you the story of Lila. Her family lives in Etobicoke. Lila was getting close to the top of the list for IBI treatment. Her parents have been dreaming about what this will mean for Lila and how it will change Lila's life. Now they feel like they have waited for nothing, as she was just kicked off the wait-list. Her family struggles to understand how this Liberal government can turn their backs on children.

Mr. Speaker, Lila and her family were promised IBI treatment. She deserves IBI treatment. Why is this government kicking Lila off the treatment?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We think Lila should not be on a waiting list. She should be getting service, and that's what this does. Lila should never have had to languish on the wait-list. We will not defend the status quo. We will not support kids like Lila staying on that wait-list. She should have—

*Interjections.*

**Interjection:** Sit down.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll take care of that part.

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finished? Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Back to the Acting Premier: Since you aren't listening to Lila's story and you kicked her off the wait-list for IBI treatment, let me share another story, the story of five-year-old Daniel from Richmond Hill. He has severe autism. He can't speak. He can't feed himself. He can't dress himself. Just months ago, after three years of waiting on the IBI wait-list with Kinark, his family received a letter saying Daniel would soon be getting IBI treatment. In fact, he was on the top of the wait-list; the paperwork was about to be completed for this summer. Then Daniel was informed that because he's over five, this government took him off the list for the treatment he desperately needed.

Mr. Speaker, Daniel's family can't get an answer from this government, despite their pleading. They asked me to pose a question to the government, so I will ask the family's question of this government. Daniel's family wants to know: "What are we supposed to do now? What will happen to our son, who can't even get his basic needs met?"

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Deputy Premier?



**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** On this side of the House, we believe that the status quo when it comes to services for kids with autism is unacceptable. It is not okay that kids spend years on the waiting list. We are investing an additional \$333 million so that 16,000 more kids can get the treatment that they so need.

1050

We will not sit back as the opposition party wants to defend the status quo. They like the old system. We're moving ahead because we don't think it's okay that kids like Daniel, like Lila or like Mason sit on the wait-list. They need to be as good as they can possibly be, and that means they need treatment and they need it earlier—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. It's much better when you address the Chair. The second thing is, I don't want conversations going on while the member is trying to answer. So the member from Leeds—Grenville will come to order and the member from Dufferin—Caledon will come to order.

You have a wrap-up sentence?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, we're doing this for the 16,000 more kids. That's why we're spending \$333 million more on services—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

New question.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Deputy Premier. Dr. Ian Dawe, who chaired the government's expert panel on autism, said, "What government has funded was not what we recommended."

Can the Deputy Premier explain to parents why the Liberal government bothered with an expert panel when it is clear they aren't interested in listening to the experts?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me quote from Margaret Spoelstra, who is the executive director of Autism Ontario. She said, "Families raising children with autism have been waiting a long time for this announcement. Providing early, evidence-based intervention, when it matters most, will set children with autism on the best path forward. This investment will set the stage for continuous learning for years to come."

Autism Speaks Canada says, "We applaud the Ontario government for consulting with an expert committee, as well as other stakeholders, and families for their guidance, and for basing this action plan on research and evidence-informed decisions."

Dr. Peter Szatmari, the chief of the child and youth mental health collaboration between CAMH, SickKids and U of T, says—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's not just the head of the government's own expert panel. The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth called the government's plan "a mug's game" and said, "Don't pretend this is about the child and ... what they need. It isn't." The advocate said children have told him, "We don't ... want you fighting over us; we just want you to provide us what we need."

What these children need, Speaker, is the IBI therapy that could change their lives. Will this government give the children what they're asking for?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm very pleased to share with the House, in response to the question about Dr. Dawe—who issued a statement yesterday because he was concerned that certain remarks were taken out of context. What Dr. Dawe said yesterday—he issued a statement saying he stands "firmly behind the recommendations made in the report by Ontario's clinical expert committee on autism, which laid out a comprehensive strategy for what" an autism system "should look like." That is what Dr. Dawe is saying.

He was the chair of the clinical expert committee. We have based this program on advice from that committee, along with other work that has been under way for some time. That report is available online.

I've met with the youth advocate on autism. I'm pleased to respond in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Liberal government is cutting children off the autism therapy they need and that experts say will help. The experts say that the government decision is wrong. The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth said it's wrong. Parents say it's wrong. Educators say it's wrong.

There isn't a single child with autism who will be better off if the government cuts them off IBI therapy when they turn five. Will the Deputy Premier admit that autism does not end at five and give these children the therapies that they so desperately need?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.  
Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to acknowledge the families who are here and the action groups who are here—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** To the Chair, please.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Sorry, Speaker.

I appreciate them being here. I've met with a number of them. May I say too, Speaker, that in recent meetings they have been extremely helpful in their advice? They've been extremely concrete on how we develop this

new program going forward. They know there's an implementation committee being struck. A number of them asked to be on it. That is being considered currently.

It's very important that I hear those stories directly from families. It's informing my thinking. It is informing the program going forward.

The current system is unacceptable. I think we can all agree on that. We want to make sure that every child who has autism gets the services when they need them and for the right duration. That's my commitment to these families here today and to all families and children facing autism.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. New question.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Deputy Premier. Yesterday, I asked the Deputy Premier about hospitals that are overcrowded, and why this Liberal government has no policies or standards for hospital occupancy. But yesterday the Deputy Premier, the former health minister, denied it was a problem and insisted it's just a "system in transition." Then she insisted it was irresponsible to build hospital capacity. Then she said, "We are building new hospitals."

Will the Deputy Premier actually get her story straight, cut the spin and admit that Liberal cuts have left Ontario hospitals in a dangerously overcrowded situation?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, we are investing \$12 billion over the next 10 years to expand and rebuild hospitals, and 35 major hospital projects are under way or are being planned. Our commitment is to continue to rebuild and to build new hospital infrastructure.

At the same time, we do recognize that many people in hospital would be better served outside of the hospital. That's why we're expanding our commitment to community-based care, home care, palliative care and long-term care.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, second time.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The hospitals are a vital part of our health care system, but when somebody is ready to leave the hospital and receive their care outside the hospital, we need to work to make sure that that care outside the hospital is available.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** According to the OECD, the safe level of occupancy for countries like the UK is 85%, but hospitals across Ontario are operating at nearly 120% capacity for months on end.

Dr. Samir Sinha, who led Ontario's Seniors Strategy, has said that when hospitals operate at or above 100% capacity, "Everyone agrees that's not a safe level to run."

But hospitals across the north, in Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay and Blind River, have been over 100% for

months on end. The Sault Area Hospital has been above 100% capacity for two whole years.

Will the Deputy Premier stop the cuts to Ontario's hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, if the leader of the third party actually had read Dr. Samir Sinha's report, Living Longer, Living Well, she would know that his advice to us was to do exactly what we're doing, which is to build capacity outside hospitals.

The solution is not to build more hospital beds in every community in the province. The solution is to provide the support that is right for patients. It's a patient-centred approach that we're taking. We're getting people the care they need, whether it's in hospital or whether it's at home or in the community or an alternate setting.

Speaker, to focus simply on hospitals and to say the solution to overcrowding in hospitals is to build more hospital beds does not reflect the root problems within the health care system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, you can't cherry-pick the advice. If hospitals shouldn't be operating over 100%, they shouldn't be operating over 100%, period, end of story.

It is not just hospitals in the north. Our hospitals in Toronto, Ottawa, Scarborough and Hamilton are all overcrowded. Hospitals in mid-sized communities like Belleville, Brantford, Burlington, Dunnville and Peterborough more often than not don't have any available beds. This is not a system in transition; this is a system in total crisis, and this Liberal government put it there.

My question once again is: Will this Liberal government stop cutting our hospitals?

1100

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I hate to do this, but I feel I have to remind the leader of the third party what she and her party voted against in the last budget. They voted against a \$1-billion increase in health care spending that included a \$345-million increase for hospitals. They voted against—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** They voted against an additional \$270 million for home care and—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** They voted against \$75 million more for hospice care, for palliative care in the community. They voted against \$85 million for community health centres.

We are moving forward. We are increasing funding to the health care system, because patients deserve that.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. During today's oppo day debate, we will be calling on your government to restore funding for IBI



therapy for children over the age of five. Thousands of Ontario families, Autism Ontario, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis, the chair of your own expert committee, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, CUPE, OPSEU and now municipalities are all opposing your decision.

Minister, how many more experts have to come forward before you understand that removing IBI therapy for kids over five will impact children's ability to communicate with their family, succeed in school and thrive in our communities?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It is beyond me why anyone in this Legislature would defend the status quo when it comes to services for kids with autism. We are adding 16,000 spaces. We're increasing funding by \$333 million, an historic investment in improving services for kids with autism, getting them off the wait-list and into service.

Let's hear what Dr. Peter Szatmari, a world-renowned expert in autism, said. He said, "It is important to personalize intervention services for children with ASD. This funding opportunity is a significant step in that direction. Early intervention for all, but different intervention at different times is an essential step in the right direction."

Suzanne Jacobson, the founder of QuickStart: Early Intervention for Autism, said, "Parents spoke and they were heard. The right service at the right time: individualized, expanded and timely services will be life-changing. We applaud"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary: the member from Wellington-Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Deputy Premier. Last Friday, I met in Georgetown with families from our riding who have children with autism spectrum disorder. Linda and David Galvao's sons, Toby and Luke, both have ASD. David and Linda are planning to be here later on today.

Their older son, Toby, began IBI therapy at age six, and within 30 days, he went from being non-verbal to speaking and even reciting the alphabet. Their younger son, Luke, has been on the IBI wait-list for three years and he's now six. Under the government's plan to ration IBI therapy, Luke would be denied the chance to reach his full potential, the same chance that IBI therapy gave to his older brother Toby at age six.

How can this government be so heartless as to say to the Galvao family that their older son has a future but their younger son is on his own?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me read one more quote, and then I know that the minister will want to speak.

Dr. Wendy Roberts, the vice-chair of the ASD Clinical Expert Committee and, again, a world-renowned expert, says, "This announcement is very good news for the ASD community. Based on scientific evidence, the new plan strongly supports the continuum of care for all children with ASD, expanding intervention services to earlier in a child's development, which is critical for improved outcomes. I am proud and excited to support the new program based on the advice of the expert panel."

That's Dr. Wendy Roberts.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. For the third time, hundreds of parents of children with autism are coming to Queen's Park. They're here to tell you, the government, to stop taking away life-changing therapy from children that have been waiting for years. Parents just want their children to be able to tell them what's wrong when they're in pain. Parents are saying, "It's pay now or pay later." Yes, IBI may be expensive, but not being proactive will cost this government much, much more.

Will the minister acknowledge that her plan will fail a generation of kids on the spectrum?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** We agree with parents and we agree with advocates that autism does not end at age five. There is no age cut-off for services in this new program. In fact, in the new program, all children with a diagnosis, including those over five, will receive better services, and they'll receive them sooner. They are customized to meet individual needs, including those who require intensive therapies and interventions.

There are 40,000 children with autism in this province. I recognize that there's a subset of that, approximately 2,200 families across the province, that will feel some changes during this transition period. That is exactly why we're paying close attention to those individual families to make sure that they get the information they need, to make sure they get the support they need and the children have reached their full—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** The experts were clear that for IBI to be effective, it needs to be for a minimum of a year, but \$8,000 will cover less than two months of IBI. Parents will now get to see the potential of their children being ripped away from them. That's cruel and it's unfair. This government is actually silencing the voices of children by not giving them the therapy that they need to communicate.

Yesterday, the city of Pickering, in the minister's own riding, passed a resolution calling on her to reinstate funding for IBI regardless of age. The minister's own riding, her own hometown, the people who elected her and sent her here, are calling on her to do the right thing and to make sure that they reinstate the kids for IBI.

Will the minister admit that she's hurting families and reverse her decision to place an age cap on IBI therapy?

*Interjections.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Resolutions from municipalities come from councillors, not from residents. I think that's important to note—

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Who do you think elects them?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Secondly, the member opposite—I would like to quote the member opposite—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you, Speaker. I think it's important to know that the member asking the question said, late last year, "Study after study has shown that [treatments] are greatly more effective when they are delivered to children before the age of seven." That was a quote from the member late last year.

The bigger point is that all autistic children deserve to get the right services, at the right intensity, at the right time, and that was my commitment. It's an historic investment of \$333 million—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

## ACCÈS À LA JUSTICE

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** My question is for the Attorney General. I know that our government is excited to ensure access to justice for all Ontarians. In fact, I know the minister herself is very committed bringing together various partners within the legal community to identify barriers and work together to address them. Reforms to our justice system that ensure simple, fast and affordable access to justice sector services is one of the ways our government is committed to improving the system. I was happy to learn of the Attorney General's Justice Roundtable, which engages with vital partners in the justice sector.

Minister, could you please speak to this House on the work you are doing at the Justice Roundtable?

1110

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais remercier le député d'Etobicoke-Centre pour cette question.

My ministry and I are committed to making the justice system simpler, faster and more accessible for all Ontarians. Our Justice Roundtable brings together key justice and community partners to discuss the issues they face and how we can work in new and different ways to resolve them together. The Justice Roundtable serves as a very important forum to promote communication and collaboration among the ministry and justice system stakeholders.

I had the pleasure of hosting our latest round table last week, and I look forward to discussing the details in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M. Yvan Baker:** Je souhaiterais remercier la ministre pour sa réponse.

Je suis ravi d'entendre que la procureure générale a réuni des partenaires et des membres de la justice pour discuter d'importants enjeux.

J'ai été également très fier d'apprendre que le ministère du Procureur général a créé deux tables d'experts sur le droit criminel et le droit de la famille qui examinent et aident à identifier des solutions potentielles dans des domaines clés. En favorisant la communication et la collaboration dans ce secteur, le système de justice bénéficie de l'expérience de ces experts.

Est-ce que la ministre peut nous en dire plus sur le travail de ces deux tables d'experts?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** En effet, je veux encore remercier le député d'Etobicoke-Centre.

Tel qu'il le mentionne, la table ronde sur la justice s'est concentrée cette année sur deux sujets principaux. Le ministère a identifié des domaines clés à l'intérieur du système du droit de la famille et du droit criminel, et a également reçu des commentaires de la part de nos partenaires du droit de la famille et du droit criminel.

La table ronde sur le droit de la famille a pour but de rendre la Cour de la famille plus accessible et plus efficace. La table ronde sur le droit criminel a pour but d'améliorer l'accès à la justice pour les accusés atteints de santé mentale.

Enfin, en travaillant de concert, nous pouvons être des leaders dans ce domaine en apportant des changements qui amélioreront l'accès à la justice, et ce, à travers tout l'Ontario.

**Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac):** Merci.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Aidan Timmins is a five-year-old boy with autism in my riding. Aidan is non-verbal, and he was on the IBI waiting list for 17 months. His dad, Sean, tells me his dream is to hear Aidan say, "I love you, Dad."

One morning last month, Sean found his wife, Sonia, in tears. In her hand was a letter stating that because Aidan had just turned five, he was suddenly no longer eligible for IBI. The day Sean and Sonia learned that "the light at the end of our tunnel" was snuffed out was April 2, world autism day. That's shameful, Speaker.

So my question is simple: Will the minister do the right thing and give Aidan the therapy he needs to find his voice?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** As both the Premier and I have said in this House on a number of occasions, our government is committed to improving the lives of children with autism and the lives of their families. That is exactly why we are addressing this very unsustainable



situation we find ourselves in. That is exactly why we don't want children to be stranded on wait-lists.

Children who have been on the IBI wait-lists are going into immediate service, and they will be supported during that time, through the \$8,000 payment for services, as well as post that.

All children who have autism, no matter where they are on the spectrum, deserve the right kind of intensity, the right kind of support. That is what the new autism program is all about. We are getting down to the family level, to make sure they are all well supported by their service provider. If that's not happening, I want to hear more from families about that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Niagara West—Glanbrook.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Minister: I've known you for a long time, and I don't believe this is you. I don't believe you would countenance a policy that would pit kids under five and their parents against kids who are older than five and their parents. I think you know in your heart, too, that parents don't like that. They don't like the notion of having to crawl over some other parents and their kids to get service.

The member next to you from Mississauga—Streetsville has a constituent in his riding named Adam—Adam is one of those kids—and his mom. Initially, Adam's treatment was supposed to be in August 2017. It would be after he turned five. They looked into the wait-list to find out with your new policy, and the answer received was August 2017. It had not changed. He would be cut off.

Minister, I know in your heart that the policy you believe in should be judging by the needs of the child, not the age or the calendar. Can you make sure Adam gets the service he requires?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Before I go to the minister, just a reminder: please, through the Chair. It's designed that way.

Minister.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member from the opposition for what I believe are very sincere words towards me. But, Speaker, I need to be very clear. I am committed to making positive change for children with autism. I am committed to making sure that this investment of \$333 million happens, notwithstanding that the opposition party voted against it and notwithstanding that the third party voted against this investment.

We're going to keep going, because these children deserve to get the support they need, whether they're currently in therapy or whether they are on a wait-list and will now be taken off that wait-list and into immediate service. I am committed to this program, Speaker. My government is committed to this. I'm committed to families here and all families in Ontario, to make it better for these children with autism. They have my unwavering commitment.

## FUNDRAISING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Can the Deputy Premier tell Ontarians how many experts they consulted before democratic reform and how many public meetings were held before introducing today's reform legislation?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm very proud that this afternoon we will be tabling a piece of legislation that will introduce some very major reforms to election financing rules in the province of Ontario.

This proposal is very much inspired by what we are hearing from the public at large where they want transparency and accountability. As a result, the proposal that will be tabled today will put a ban on corporate and union donations. It will introduce strict limitations on third party advertising. It's going to ensure that there are hard caps on limits for fundraising and many other important features.

I expect, and the Premier expects, that the opposition parties, especially the NDP, will participate in the process to make sure that Ontarians get an opportunity to bring their points of view forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Back to the Acting Premier: After a decade of scandals, today's legislation does not address the cynicism or the trust issues that Ontarians have with this government. This bill limits non-partisan groups from speaking out about issues like autism, climate change or fair pay, but it does give free rein for partisan government advertising that, in the words of the AG, allows self-congratulatory and self-promotional advertising that will be of little practical use to the citizens paying for it. This bill is about helping the Liberal Party.

Will the Deputy Premier commit to fixing the bill they've introduced, or will the government be using its legislative majority to ensure that this bill helps the Ontario Liberal Party once again?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I find it rich coming from the NDP, who have done nothing but drag their feet on this process. They have done nothing but offer one—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** For some members, it really doesn't matter where you sit; I can tell who you are.

Carry on.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** The NDP has failed to offer one substantive thought or idea on this very important issue. When we have asked them to come to meetings so we can discuss the substantive aspects, they have boycotted.

I want to give credit to the official opposition for coming to the meeting and engaging in a healthy discussion. I want to give credit to the Green Party, who came to a meeting and give substantive ideas. The NDP? Nowhere to be seen. So before the NDP gets on their holy place, they should engage in this process.

Let's make sure that we get this matter to the committee so that we can hear from Ontarians across—



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
New question.

1120

### RABIES

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. There has been a lot of mention in the news about rabies in the Hamilton area lately. My understanding is that these animals have been infected with a particular strain of rabies that hasn't been seen in Ontario since 2005. I know that Ontarians might have questions about how the re-emergence of this disease happened and what steps Ontario is taking to mitigate it.

Can the minister share how his ministry and its partners are working to control this outbreak and ensure public awareness of raccoon rabies?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member from Northumberland—Quinte West for the question.

Speaker, while we can't say for sure how we have ended up in this situation, with an outbreak of rabies in Ontario, we expect that an animal probably came in on a vehicle, like a railcar or something.

We've had a great record in the province for eight or 10 years, since we have had a situation where the ministry has had to deal with a rabies outbreak. That is owed, in large part, to a great program, a made-in-Ontario solution that has been in place for a number of years, where the baits—some 220,000, last fall, to deal with this outbreak—are distributed around the border communities in the United States to try to prevent areas that don't have a program—from those animals finding their way into Ontario and creating a problem for us. We distributed about 220,000 baits last year. The animals basically go into hibernation. The baits are less effective over the winter months, so we stop the program in the winter.

I've got more to add to that in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Thanks to the minister for his answer. It's good to know that his ministry is responding to this outbreak.

The last time there was an outbreak of this nature, I know that our tools were very limited, leading to the culling of many raccoons as a preventive measure. It is reassuring that we now have tools like this vaccine that can be more broadly and more humanely used to control the spread of this disease.

Can the minister elaborate on his ministry's plans to further address this problem?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member for the opportunity to elaborate.

Speaker, as I mentioned in the opening response, this is a made-in-Ontario solution—220,000 baits last year. We resumed the baiting again on April 1—an additional 500,000 baits, with more to come. By the time the program is completed, we will have distributed somewhere in the order of 1.1 million baits around the province of Ontario, hoping to be as effective as we can.

We're doing everything that we can. We want this question today to bring some sort of public awareness around this campaign so that if people see animals—skunks, raccoons, foxes—that are acting in an odd manner, to make sure they contact their animal services agencies and their municipalities and let them know.

We believe that the program will probably take at least a couple of years before we can really see if we have had an ability to be effective and eliminate the rabies problem in Ontario once more.

I want to thank the people on the ground for a made-in-Ontario solution that has been very effective over the last—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
New question.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Kristen from Cobourg has a son, Carter, who has autism and is turning six in August. He's smart and capable of learning, but he's unable to feed himself with a spoon or a fork, unable to dress or bathe himself, and unable to tell his mom if he's in pain or how he feels.

Carter started IBI therapy in April, and the results were amazing. He mastered two new skills with just 20 hours of IBI. But the therapy will only run for six months, not the years that he was promised.

Carter is proof that IBI is critical, even for children five and older. But it needs to be consistent.

Kristen is scared about what will happen without this treatment. I'm standing up for her because her own MPP cancelled her meetings three times and told her that he wouldn't read anything that she wanted to leave behind.

Mr. Speaker, will the government give families like Kristen and Carter hope for a better future and restore IBI therapy for children over five?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member for the question. It's an important one. Her question is about children currently getting IBI therapy. It's important to clarify that those children will continue to get IBI therapy. Yes, they will have a clinical assessment at six months, and the course of action will be determined by that clinical assessment. If they need continuous intensive support, that's what they will get. They are not being automatically removed from intensive therapy. That is a misconception out there. It's important that the opposition get the facts straight.

It speaks to the need to make sure that we're supporting children, wherever they are on the spectrum, that they get the support they need based on the clinical advice and that they're well supported going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?  
The member from Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Back to the Minister of Children and Youth Services: Laura Martin of Conestoga has a seven-year-old son, Cole, who, after three years of waiting, finally started receiving IBI treatments in January. Laura has already begun seeing significant improvements



in Cole's self-control in dealing with his aggressiveness. Now this Premier is pulling the rug out. Battling families of children with autism to prevent them the hope for treatment they've waited so long for, in the words of his mom, Ms. Martin, is "ludicrous."

Will the minister do the right thing for Laura Martin, Cole and the families across Ontario? Will she restore families' hope and restore the IBI treatment that her government has ripped away from Cole?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** When I meet with families, it's stories like this that motivate me. They inspire me—to hear about the progress that these children are making. That is what we all want. We want to see children with autism spectrum disorder make progress. I welcome those stories. It motivates me and inspires our government in terms of the work we do. It just reinforces our commitment to make sure all of these children, all 40,000, are well supported in this program, which will provide more service, more money and more individual support to families.

I welcome these stories from the families here today, from the opposition. I encourage the opposition to share those stories with me because it's very, very important that the voices of families and children continue to be heard.

#### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. On Saturday, we learned that the London and District Distress Centre will close by the end of the year, with its crisis response line transferred to the provincial agency ConnexOntario. That same day, NDP leader Andrea Horwath joined me and the member from London–Fanshawe in London as we listened to patients and health care providers share horror stories about the failure of our health care system and the crisis in mental health.

Telephone crisis support provides a key entry point into a mental health system that is already stretched to the limit. Too many Londoners in crisis have been turned away from ER or forced to wait days to access emergency mental health services. The new 24/7 mental health crisis centre is already at capacity.

What will the Deputy Premier do to ensure that the community mental health services Londoners need are in place after they call the crisis line?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member for London West for this very important question. I know that she genuinely does care about having the right supports there for people who are struggling with mental health issues.

I can assure you that this is a high priority for our government. We have invested substantially in mental health services, including, as she mentioned, the new 24/7 crisis centre that is a made-in-London innovation, which I do hope will spread to communities across the province. It was the result of everyone in the community coming together and designing a solution that fit the needs of London.

She mentioned that it's at capacity. That tells us that we were on the right track when we funded it. But there's more to do, obviously, and having a place where people can call when they are in distress is an important part of the continuum of services.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary: the member from London–Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** London's new 24/7 mental health crisis centre was full almost from the day it opened. About 70% of those walking in the door are first-time users of mental health supports, and 60% of the people are under the age of 35. Clearly, the demands for mental health services in London are increasing and will continue to grow. What concrete action will the Acting Premier take to expand access to community-based mental health services in London?

1130

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I thank the other member from London for this question.

Again, I think we're all on the same page when we say we want the best possible services for people struggling. That's why, Speaker, we've invested substantially in mental health. In fact, we have almost doubled the funding for mental health and addiction services since we were elected. We have developed a comprehensive strategy that we are implementing. There is no question that people facing mental health challenges need and deserve to get the support they need in a timely way, and we're making important investments to achieve that goal.

#### POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Mr. Speaker, the member from Ottawa Centre and I recently attended the start of the Heroes are Human Capital-to-Capital ride in Ottawa. This 15-day bike ride event covers 1,538 kilometres, from the capital of Canada to the capital of the United States. The minister was also there, and we had a wonderful time working to increase awareness about PTSD and other injuries faced by first responders.

I know that this government passed Bill 163 in order to help address PTSD in first responders. Could the minister please provide the House with an update on the government's PTSD awareness initiatives?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to thank the member for that very important question and also for her support and the support of all members of this House on Bill 163.

I've been hearing from first responders across the province. They're talking about reducing stigma. They're talking about the launch of the awareness campaign. In March, we had the radio ads; we had the social media.

I'm happy to tell the House today that our PTSD posters are now being distributed all over the province and they're starting to work, Speaker. They're going to firefighters, police officers, paramedics—those people in the field who can see this and can come forward and start talking about PTSD. We've shared them at the paramedic

chiefs' conference, the Partners in Prevention conference, and I know that members from all parties in this House are sharing them with their own first responders.

We did attend the Heroes are Human Capital-to-Capital ride, an excellent event, a bike ride from Ottawa to Washington. It's going to help raise awareness about post-traumatic stress disorder.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his answer. As I mentioned, we met numerous first responders at the start of the bike ride who were excited that our government passed legislation to help first responders when they need our help the most. Mental health issues demand the attention of us all. I'm happy that we're working to end the stigma, as the minister explained.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our government has also launched a website and other resources to assist with prevention and awareness of PTSD. Can the minister please provide this House with an update?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member for that supplementary question.

Members of the House will remember when we supported this. Part of the PTSD strategy was a tool kit so that employers of first responders would have a guide as to how they could deal with prevention plans. That tool kit is available at [www.firstrespondersfirst.ca](http://www.firstrespondersfirst.ca). I'd urge people to go to the site. We continue to update the tool kits on a regular basis. The feedback has been incredibly positive.

The other part we did was that we required employers of first responders to submit their prevention plans to me. I'm going to publish those plans publicly so that we can learn from each other.

The building blocks for an excellent strategy to combat PTSD are under way in the province of Ontario. We're going to be asking for their prevention plans to be in by April of 2017.

Speaker, we promised Ontario would be a leader. We are a leader now in PTSD—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. The minister says that kids aren't getting kicked off IBI, but that's not the reality for the parents in my riding. Six-year-old Lawson should have had his IBI assessment six months after treatment started. Instead, the government announced their new policy. He had his assessment two and a half months early.

Just two weeks later, his mother received the letter about him being transitioned off IBI. She has been fighting to keep him on ever since. Lawson's mother waited six years for her son to be able to call her "Mom." Now that Lawson is finally getting the treatment he needs, his mother is living with fear that he will lose it, and anger at

this government that they are taking it away. That is the real result of the minister's policy and the reality for autistic kids.

Will the minister reverse her policy for kids like Lawson on the services they need and are entitled to?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member for the question.

I think we should all agree, may I suggest, that we are not clinicians. We are not the clinical judge of what is appropriate for a child's treatment. I leave that expertise to the clinicians. Children who are in IBI will continue to get IBI and then they'll have a clinical assessment; then it goes from there. What's really important to note, Speaker, is that all children with a diagnosis, including those five and over, will get better services sooner that are customized to meet individual needs.

I'm very open, as I have said and as the Premier has said, about how the new program looks in terms of the service delivery to the parents. I think they've provided some excellent advice. We're taking that under consideration in the context of implementation and we'll keep listening to parents and advocates.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services: Angelo is a nine-year-old who lives in Ajax-Pickering. In a letter typed by his mother, Angelo talked to the Premier about his six-year-old brother Matteo, who waited four years to receive IBI therapy. Angelo spoke about his love for his brother and the fact that IBI therapy has made him really happy to go to school.

Angelo said, "Now he's in IBI, he is mastering a lot of stuff. He understands when I talk to him, he plays with me, he dresses himself, he answers to his name and looks at me.

"I want my brother to have a good life, to be happy like he is now, to talk more, and not run away so we can go out more and be happy together...."

In his letter, he pleaded with the Premier to change her mind on IBI funding.

Will the minister cancel the cuts to funding for IBI therapy for those above five years old so that Matteo can continue on the road to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Again, I thank the opposition for the question, Speaker.

I think there is reference to an autistic child in school. That's a very important part of the program going forward, because it is important that every child, every student has access to the support they need in school and at home, and that's why there has been \$77 million invested in school board capacity to improve the learning environment for children with ASD.



I want the same things as this mother wants for her child. I want them to be successful. I want them to be happy. I want them to reach their full potential. That's why we're making this historic investment.

The motion coming forward today from the House, Speaker, with the support of the NDP, quite frankly, will take us backwards. It will keep kids on wait-lists. It will keep kids out of treatment. I don't want that. Families don't want that. Advocates don't want that. Let's do the best we can with this investment going forward.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

I am concerned that the Liberal government appears to think they know better than the clinicians and experts when it comes to services for children with autism. Not only has the government misrepresented what was in the expert panel's recommendations—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

Not only has the government misrepresented what was in the experts' panel—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And if it happens again, you lose the question.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** They have now called the former chair telling the truth about the government's failure "regrettable and unfortunate." What is regrettable and unfortunate, Speaker, is that the government is stealing services from children with autism just to save money.

Will the minister immediately rethink this plan and ensure no child—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm not sure how spending \$333 million more, in addition to the \$190 million a year that we spend on this program, is anything less than an investment.

Speaker, I'm not the expert. I'm the Minister of Children—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just by way of information, it's never too late to be named.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'll continue to listen to the voices of parents, to listen to the voices of experts who are very learned in this field and to listen to the groups that have given us some very concrete and helpful advice in recent weeks. I'm very appreciative of that. Their advice will guide our implementation.

We all want the same thing: to help these children to reach their full potential.

### ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo on a point of order.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I have a question on the order paper, number 658, regarding missing persons legislation. It is past due.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** One moment, please.

It's my information that it is not overdue.

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** On a point of order: I'd like to introduce, in the members' east gallery, Mr. Larry Davis, who is a director of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture from Brant county.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

The deputy House leader on a point of order.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to welcome Kathleen Powell of the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre, who is with us today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo on a point of order.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I'd like to introduce constituents from my riding, Ken MacGlaughlin and Janet McLaughlin, here today on the oppo day motion.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1142 to 1500.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It is my tremendous honour to introduce to the House some members from the Ontario Museum Association. We have Cathy Molloy as well as Marty Brent and Chuck Scott, who also represent PAMA, which is a museum in the region of Peel. Please join me in welcoming them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Please indulge me while I introduce a large number of parents who are here to join us: Kristen Ellison, Stephanie Ridley, Stan Byma, Ross McLean, Gary Burbidge, Dallis Nimmo, Richelle Parker, Steven Sherwood, Kelly McDowell—from my riding of Dufferin–Caledon—Diana Rojas, Ailen and Jose Salazar, Samantha Billings, Bruce and Laura McIntosh, David and Lisa Lehtinen, Dr. James Porter, Deborah Campbell, Mike Grant, Josie Chaves, Nicole Roy, Rob and Joan Martin, Tony Sferruzzi, Christine Mok, Tina Pinto, Kurt Lingenfelter and Taslim Murad. If I've mispronounced your name, I apologize.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No problem. Thank you.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I don't have a list of names, but I just want to welcome all the parents who are here today for the autism debate.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I will again introduce, from the Portia Learning Centre, providing IBI therapy, Robyn Golding, Mandy Noel and Brittney Pike, and also parents here today for the debate around autism. Again, my friend Chris Steele and Tobi Reilly are here in the audience.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want all the members to please welcome to Queen's Park Christine Lyons and Stephen Reid of the Police Association of Ontario. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

#### REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that the following report was tabled: the report of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario concerning the review of expense claims covering the period April 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016, under the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expense Review and Accountability Act, 2002.

#### REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I also beg to inform the House that the following report was tabled: the report of the Integrity Commissioner, under section 14(b) of the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expense Review and Accountability Act, 2002, with respect to allowable expenses under the act.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize May as Hepatitis Awareness Month. I'm struck by the opportunity we have here in Ontario to take leadership in developing a response that will help end this viral disease.

There are approximately 110,000 Ontarians presently living with hepatitis C, and the majority of them are unaware of this status; unaware and, in many cases, appearing asymptomatic while they quietly incur liver damage. Liver damage can lead to fibrosis, cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver transplant or death.

However, there is a cure for hepatitis C, but this cure is kept out of reach for many through restrictive clinical criteria that demand a patient be halfway through to cirrhosis before we will allow them any treatment. Speaker, we would never let a cancer patient get worse before we treat them, so why is it that our health care system asks that of individuals with hepatitis C?

We have an opportunity here in Ontario to treat everyone with hepatitis C.

I urge the minister to show leadership and take the lead on this epidemic by providing a cure for those who need it and eliminate the archaic rules for treating individuals with hepatitis C.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I rise today on the very important issue of Lyme disease. This disease affects hundreds of Ontarians, yet this government has been inactive in fulfilling its mandate to create a comprehensive and integrated strategy to combat Lyme disease.

Residents in my riding have concerns about misdiagnosis and accessing treatment. I've heard stories of young people who have had their lives drastically changed: young women and men, formerly very physically active, now physically and mentally overcome by the disease, and young adults who are now unable to have children because of the late diagnosis and lack of treatment of this debilitating disease here in Ontario. It is heartbreaking, Speaker.

We know that Lyme disease is spreading. Canada reported 500 cases of Lyme disease in 2014, but expects 10,000 Canadians will be infected by 2020. But there is hope, Speaker. There's research that shows that individuals who have the tick removed within 24 hours have better success not contracting the disease and that treatment in the first 30 days gives them better chances of recovery.

But now is the time to take action. Ontarians need timely access to accurate testing and effective treatment and for this treatment to be covered by OHIP. Nearly 18 months have passed in this House since my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin passed his motion which called upon this government to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease. Ontarians are looking to this government to act now to create a strategy which includes accurate testing and timely access to fully funded treatment.

#### EGLINTON CROSSTOWN LRT

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Yesterday, I hosted a consultation in Etobicoke Centre on the proposed Eglinton West LRT with our Minister of Transportation, Steven Del Duca. I want to thank the minister for coming to the riding and the hundreds of constituents who attended last night and provided their thoughtful input.

The Eglinton corridor is vital to my community as it is home to tens of thousands and a commute for tens of thousands more every day. That's why I was not surprised to hear the input and some of the concerns that were expressed last night. I repeatedly heard concerns that an LRT would mean lost left-turn lanes, or could impede north-south traffic, worsen the already congested commute along Eglinton and increase traffic in local residential streets.

I also heard concerns about safety, noise, construction and other impacts. Last night, I heard very clearly from my community what residents want. They want transit that does not impede traffic or make gridlock worse, and



I certainly heard many people express the need for tunnelling.

Since becoming MPP for Etobicoke Centre, I have followed this issue closely. In addition to last night's meeting, I've consulted with members of my community and local residents and ratepayers' organizations, as well as co-hosted a transit town hall, participated in local consultations and met with Premier Kathleen Wynne and Minister Steven Del Duca on a number of occasions. In all those interactions, I have advocated for our community by sharing the input I've received, and I will continue to do so.

That said, much more remains to be done. Smart transit needs to be built with community input on the basis of a strong business case and must include a plan to address the impact on the local community. Last night was an important step in achieving that goal.

Again, I want to thank the minister for joining us. I also want to reinforce that we need a transit solution that is beneficial to commuters, taxpayers and Etobicoke Centre, and I won't stop working until we achieve that goal.

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** As Ontario PC critic for tourism, culture and sport, it's an honour to recognize International Museum Day, which is celebrated on May 18.

I want to begin by acknowledging members of the Ontario Museum Association, here today meeting with MPPs at Museums at Queen's Park Day. Ontario's 700 museums are more than just a home for artifacts and documents. Today's museums are as focused on their integral role in building a brighter tomorrow for Ontario as they are in preserving our past. They support local economies by sustaining over 9,800 jobs and attracting 17.5 million visitors annually, many coming from around the world to discover Ontario's incredible museums.

In my own riding, places like the Brockville Museum, Delta's Old Stone Mill museum and the Thousand Islands Boat Museum in Gananoque are true community hubs. They encourage lifelong learning by opening their doors to people of all ages and walks of life through school visits, summer camps, speakers' series and workshops. By challenging us to think critically, museums spark curiosity and a quest for knowledge that can only lead to more innovative, interesting and vibrant communities.

1510

I want to also personally thank the over 32,000 museum volunteers in Leeds–Grenville and across Ontario who so selflessly give their time and talents. As we mark International Museum Day tomorrow, I urge all Ontarians to visit a museum soon to learn more about how they are enriching lives and our communities.

#### HAMILTON CELEBRITY SOFTBALL CLASSIC

**Miss Monique Taylor:** On Sunday afternoon, I had the great pleasure of attending the Celebrity Softball

Classic at Bernie Arbour Stadium in my riding of Hamilton Mountain.

Sponsored by the Hamilton Cardinals, the Bulldogs and the Tiger-Cats, the event was held in support of the Tim Horton Children's Foundation and Hamilton Challenger Baseball. I'm a hometown fan, and it was so great to see so many special players there, including Zach Collaros, Simoni Lawrence, Brandon Banks, Mike Filer and of course, our very own Pigskin Pete.

Having started in Hamilton, Tim Hortons is a bit of an institution in our city, and our community appreciates the great work done by their children's foundation, allowing some kids who might not get the opportunity a vacation or to go to camp.

I'm also a huge supporter of Hamilton Challenger Baseball, who does a fantastic job of making sure that kids with disabilities have the opportunity to play baseball in the structure that suits their abilities.

Based at Inch Park on the mountain, their opening day is coming up on May 29, and I'm so looking forward to being there and seeing the smiles returning on so many faces. I encourage all members of the House to join us that day.

I also wanted to mention that regardless whether there was hail, snow, rain or a storm on Sunday afternoon, it didn't stop anybody from filling the stadium in Hamilton and it was a great day.

#### AJAX HOME WEEK

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I'm pleased to stand today in the House to recognize the 46th annual Ajax Home Week, commencing Sunday, June 12, to Sunday, June 19, ending on Father's Day. We recently completed yet another National Volunteer Week, and the dedication and hard work of Ajax volunteers, young and old alike, make it a success year after year.

I also had the honour to commence, with the Ajax Kinsmen, Ajax Home Week some 46 years ago, commencing in 1971. There are so many groups involved. They just want to say thank you to the public who support their charitable works that give back to the community. Our major sponsoring organizations have always been the Ajax Kinsmen, Legion, Lions, Optimists and Legion Branch 322.

Ajax Home Week has also changed over the years to accommodate the growth and diversity that has made Ajax the great municipality that it is. The week-long celebration is for everyone, regardless of gender, religion, race, age or personal means, and that is something that I wrote into our guidelines some 46 years ago.

We start Ajax Home Week with a free family fun day. The entire day is on us. It's on the hard-working volunteers who make things happen.

I'm looking at that clock. Is that 16 seconds, Mr. Speaker?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Fifteen?

The grand finale is on Father's Day, Mr. Speaker, of all things. That day begins with the Ajax Rotary pancake breakfast, which will serve somewhere in the range of 2,500 pancake breakfasts—and you don't need any more, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're right.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Thank you very much.

#### KEVIN MCKAY

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** On behalf of our leader, Patrick Brown, I rise today to pay respect to Private Kevin McKay, a local hero from the riding of Simcoe North and the Barrie area.

Mickey, as he was known by his friends, was born in Richmond Hill, but moved to Barrie and later to Oro-Medonte township at a young age. He attended Eastview Secondary School, where he became a cherished friend to so many.

Kevin went on to join the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry division out of an unwavering dedication to protect his country and those less fortunate than him.

Tragically, Kevin was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan six years ago this week, just days before he was to return home from his tour of duty.

Kevin's legacy is not that he was the 144th of 158 Canadians killed in Afghanistan, but, rather, the impact that he had on the lives of so many others. Kevin helped children in Afghanistan safely receive an education for the first time, while being a loving friend and son to those back home in Oro-Medonte.

The least we can do as parliamentarians is pay respect to those who have paid the ultimate price for our way of life and our freedom. Today, on behalf of Mr. Brown and our caucus, I say thank you to Kevin's parents, Beth and Fred, and brother Riley for the truly great life of Private Kevin McKay. May he never be forgotten.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

##### SEMAINE DE LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES ENFANTS

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** May 1 to 7 is designated as Children's Mental Health Week, which is about increasing awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health problems, decreasing stigma and understanding that help and treatment is available and can work.

On May 1, the Orleans Bowling Centre hosted an important event, the fourth annual James Strikes Back Bowl-A-Thon. I was proud to put a team together with family and staff to bowl in support of youth mental health and in memory of James Osborne. James was an avid bowler who tragically took his life at the age of 18 as a result of depression, a mental illness that affects one in every five youth in Canada.

The family event was created so children, young people and adults can have conversations about youth

mental health, generate awareness and tackle this pressing issue while raising funds that go towards youth mental health.

Il est important de s'instruire sur le sujet pour reconnaître les signes et tendre la main à ceux qui en ont besoin. Plus nous en parlons, plus nous réduisons la honte et la stigmatisation associées afin que les jeunes puissent obtenir l'aide dont ils ont besoin, quand ils en ont le plus besoin.

#### VESAK

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak about an important event for Buddhists here and around the world. This month, there are celebrations taking place around the province to mark Vesak, or Buddha Day, a commemoration of the birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha.

I would like to extend best wishes to everyone celebrating this important occasion. Vesak is a time for humility and generosity, a time to make an effort to bring happiness to the less fortunate and a time to give donations to local charities.

During this time, Buddhists celebrate by meditating, singing and eating vegetarian meals. It's a happy and deeply spiritual celebration. The main message of Vesak is universal peace and freedom. That's why those celebrating will sometimes release thousands of birds and animals to celebrate the giving of freedom.

Over the next few weeks, festivals will be taking place across the province. I want to wish all Buddhists here and around the world a very happy Vesak.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### PROTECTING STUDENTS ACT, 2016

##### LOI DE 2016 PROTÉGEANT LES ÉLÈVES

Mrs. Sandals moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 200, An Act to amend the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007 and the Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 200, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les éducatrices et les éducateurs de la petite enfance et la Loi de 1996 sur l'Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The proposed Protecting Students Act would strengthen the disciplinary processes for educators and increase transparency at the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood



Educators. The changes will help protect children and students and maintain public confidence. In particular, the act would require the mandatory revocation of a teacher's certificate if they are found guilty of sexual abuse or prescribed acts of child pornography.

1520

ELECTION FINANCES STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT DES LOIS  
EN CE QUI CONCERNE  
LE FINANCEMENT ÉLECTORAL

Mr. Naqvi moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 201, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act and the Taxation Act, 2007 / Projet de loi 201, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur le financement des élections et la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, this bill makes a number of amendments to the Election Finances Act. Among them:

Corporations and trade unions are prohibited from making contributions to parties, constituency associations, nomination contestants, candidates and leadership contestants. Contribution limits for individuals are reduced.

Also, nomination contestants—persons seeking to be endorsed as a party's candidate in an electoral district—are brought within the act.

Quarterly allowances are made payable to registered parties.

The rules regarding loans and loan guarantees are made more restrictive.

Restrictions are placed on the amounts that third parties may spend on political advertising during elections and the six-month period before scheduled general election periods.

Restrictions are placed on the political advertising spending of registered political parties during the six-month period before scheduled general election periods.

The indexation factor used for inflation adjustment is put on an annual basis, based on changes in the consumer price index for Ontario.

The threshold at which candidates are entitled to receive partial reimbursement of their campaign expenses is reduced from 15% of the popular vote to 10%.

The Taxation Act, 2007, is amended to make contributions to leadership contestants eligible for tax credits.

STANDING UP AGAINST  
ANTI-SEMITISM IN ONTARIO ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LA LUTTE  
CONTRE

L'ANTISÉMITISME EN ONTARIO

Mr. Hudak moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 202, An Act respecting participation in boycotts and other anti-Semitic actions / Projet de loi 202, Loi concernant la participation au boycottage et à d'autres actes antisémites.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'm pleased to say that the co-sponsor of this bill is the member for Eglinton-Lawrence, a respected veteran member, Mr. Colle.

The short title is Standing Up Against Anti-Semitism in Ontario Act, 2016.

Speaker, as you may know, BDS stands for boycott of, divested from and sanctions against Israel academics and students, corporations and businesses and cultural institutions. Its goal is to sponsor the de-legitimization of the state of Israel as well as to foster hatred and animosity against those of Jewish faith in support of Israel.

I think it's a very good sign that the Premier herself and cabinet are in Israel at this point in time, indicating that close friendship. This bill will reinforce that by being first-of-its-kind legislation. It in no way infringes on free speech, but it does say to somebody that if you do support intimidation or discrimination, then the government won't do business with you. Similarly, it would compel public sector pension funds not to invest in companies that promote hatred and division. And, third, it would call on universities and colleges not to participate in the BDS movement.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of bills? Introduction of bills? Last call for introduction of bills. Last call, right? The member from Niagara West-Glanbrook.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker. Appropriately the last call.

FREE MY RYE ACT  
(LIQUOR STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT), 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LA VENTE LIBRE  
DE WHISKY (MODIFIANT DES LOIS  
EN CE QUI CONCERNE  
LES BOISSONS ALCOOLIQUES)

Mr. Hudak moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 203, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act and the Liquor Licence Act with respect to the sale of spirits / Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les alcools et la

Loi sur les permis d'alcool en ce qui concerne la vente de spiritueux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The short title is called Free My Rye Act. Basically, what this bill does is it looks at a number of the measures that were made by the existing government and the previous PC government that expanded access and created jobs in the wine and beer industry and to convey them now to Ontario's distillers.

By way of example, Speaker, it would lower the tax rate, specifically the markup when it comes to small batch products. It would allow for direct delivery of spirits to licensed establishments. It would allow spirits to be sold by the glass at licensed establishments, as exists for beer and for wine. And it eliminates the middleman to allow more investment in this area to create jobs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introduction of bills? Last call. No pun intended.

Just before I move on to the next one, I'm going to ask that we make sure that explanatory notes are used in the description of a bill. It prevents debate or discussion happening, and it's the way we need to do those things. So I'm going to ask you to make sure you draw from explanatory notes, and that if they're too long, précis them, please.

## MOTIONS

### CONSIDERATION OF BILL 201

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, pursuant to standing order number 74, I move that the order for second reading of Bill 201, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act and the Taxation Act, 2007, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Naqvi moves that the order for second reading of Bill 201, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act and the Taxation Act, 2007, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### CRIMEAN TATAR FLAG

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the flying of the flag of the Crimean Tatar people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice.

Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I move that the flag of the Crimean Tatar people be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole on Thursday, May 19, 2016, commencing at 10 a.m., subject to being temporarily interrupted for any other flag-raising that would normally occur during this period.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader moves that the flag of the Crimean Tatar people be flown on the Legislative courtesy pole—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispensed.

Agreed? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### POLICE WEEK

#### SEMAINE DE LA POLICE

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm very pleased to rise in recognition of Police Week, which runs from May 15 to May 21 this year. It is observed each year in May to coincide with Peace Officers Memorial Day, which is recognized internationally on May 15.

Police Week is an annual event dedicated to recognizing the outstanding work Ontario's police officers do each and every day in our local communities, and it is a week to celebrate the steps we are taking together to make our province even safer.

Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to express, on behalf of our Premier, our government and the people of Ontario, our sincere thanks to the brave police officers who serve us and keep our communities safe. Our government is proud of the partnerships we have built with our police services and we pledge today to continue to strengthen and support these partnerships moving forward.

Notre gouvernement est fier des partenariats que nous avons établis avec nos services policiers, partenariats que nous entendons bien continuer de renforcer et d'appuyer.

We have seen the positive results of collective police services. Ontario is the safest place to live in Canada and is now one of the safest jurisdictions in North America. Since 2003, Ontario's crime rate has dropped by 36% and Ontario's violent crime rate has dropped by 27%. In fact, Ontario has had the lowest crime rate of any province and territory every year since 2004.

En fait, l'Ontario a le taux de criminalité le plus bas de toutes les provinces et de tous les territoires du pays, chaque année, depuis 2004.

For that and everything they do, we owe them our deepest gratitude.



The theme for Police Week this year is “Discover Policing for Safer Communities,” building on last year’s theme, which encouraged Ontarians to learn about what the police organizations do and to celebrate their roles in building safe and healthy communities.

Local police services will be out in communities across the province showcasing the diversity of options a career in policing provides, and encouraging the public to learn more about this career choice.

1530

Speaker, I had the opportunity to join Chief Charles Bordeleau in Ottawa for their kickoff celebration, and I encourage all members of the Legislature and all Ontarians to visit local Police Week events in their own communities to show their support for our police officers.

Police Week is not only a week to thank our police officers for the work they do but to look ahead to ensure that our police have the tools, training and supports they need to tackle the changing and complex nature of 21st-century crime. That is the heart of the government’s efforts to develop a strategy for a safer Ontario. It is our government’s blueprint for building an effective, efficient and community-based model of policing for the 21st century, finding smarter and better ways to do things and using evidence and experience to improve outcomes.

We will focus on collaborative partnerships that include police and other sectors such as education, health care and social services to create a more integrated approach to how we help those in crisis and work to prevent crime from happening in the first place.

I had the opportunity earlier this year to travel to many communities across the province and hold consultations on our Strategy for a Safer Ontario. Through these engagement sessions, I learned from Ontario’s diverse population about the unique challenges facing police in urban, rural, remote and indigenous communities. These meetings and conversations with Ontarians have reinforced that we all have a role to play in making our communities safe, secure and healthy. That is why we are focused on building partnerships among all social service providers in communities across the province. I look forward to continuing to work with our policing, community safety and other partners as we move forward on our plan to build even safer communities across Ontario.

Je me réjouis à l’idée de poursuivre notre collaboration avec nos partenaires du milieu policier, de la sécurité communautaire et des autres secteurs, de manière à faire progresser notre plan visant à rendre encore plus sûres les collectivités de l’Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I want to especially recognize and thank those unsung police officers who work tirelessly in their communities in addition to their job. Whether it be as a mentor to our youth, volunteering their time with sports clubs or community groups, or assisting local charities, these countless and selfless acts our police officers do every day are truly the backbone of the safe neighbourhoods and strong communities we all enjoy.

Ces innombrables actes altruistes qu’accomplissent au quotidien nos policières et policiers représentent la clé de voûte de ces quartiers sécuritaires et de ces collectivités vibrantes que nous apprécions tous.

I know every member has stories about the extraordinary work done by police officers, and I encourage members of this Legislature to reflect on them this week and share them using the hashtag #PoliceWeekONT.

I urge all members of this House to participate in your community and pay tribute to local police officers and local organizations that work so effectively to enhance community safety and well-being.

J’invite tous les membres de l’Assemblée législative à prendre part à ces activités dans leurs collectivités et à rendre hommage aux agentes et agents de police, ainsi qu’aux organismes communautaires, qui, à l’échelon local, s’emploient avec une efficacité remarquable à améliorer le bien-être et la sécurité dans la collectivité.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It’s time for responses.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Since 1970, Police Week has been observed in May to coincide with Peace Officers Memorial Day, recognized internationally on May 15.

Police Week is governed by four specific objectives. The first one is to strengthen police ties with the community. Second, it’s to honour police officers both past and present for the public safety and security that they provide to the communities. Third, it’s to promote the work police do in their communities, and fourth, it’s to inform the community about the police role in public safety and security.

This year’s theme, “Discover Policing for Safer Communities,” provides an opportunity for communities to discover the many ways police are, in fact, working to keep their communities safe.

As the minister noted, police services across Ontario are reaching out to their communities to share just how they keep all of us safe, and also to keep talking about how we can continue to do better.

Speaker, I encourage you and all legislators to see what your local police service is doing online on their websites and Facebook pages. You can also follow the hashtag #PoliceWeekONT on Twitter.

This year, the Chatham-Kent Police Service, in collaboration with an Ursuline College Chatham—UCC—media class, produced a video taking an inside look at policing here in our municipality. Numerous officers and members of the police service discussed their role and how they work hard on a daily basis to keep the residents of Chatham-Kent safe. Deputy Chief Jeff Littlewood said, “Police Week gives us the opportunity to promote the hard work and commitment that our officers and members have for public safety. Every day, we have ‘boots on the ground’ dedicated to keeping the citizens of Chatham-Kent safe.”

To reflect on what that service and sacrifice means, I’d like to read the following poem written by Lieutenant Dan Marcou, who is actually from Wisconsin, but whose



words are universal. It's entitled *A Full Measure of Emotion*.

What did they do to get their names on that wall?  
There is a process we should pause right here to recall.  
For a name to conjure a full measure of emotion  
We must remember the ingredients of a full measure  
of devotion.

They all gave one last kiss, said one last goodbye.  
The moment probably passed without even a sigh.  
They sat through one last lineup, shared one last joke.  
What lay ahead was unknown so, not a tear fell, nor  
did a voice choke.

There was no fine last-meal-cuisine, but some were  
fed well.

They had a Big Mac, a slice, or tacos at "The Bell."  
They didn't think themselves heroes or in any way  
royal.

They just lived the life of servants, and to duty they  
were loyal.

Then came that last call, they said one last "10-4."  
Last concerns came to mind, they'd been there before.  
They hit the lights one last time going one last place in  
a hurry.

Their minds heavily engaged in one last worry.

Then for one last time it all happened so fast.  
They faced one last suspect, had one last fight to the  
last.

One last time that they discovered this job is so rough.  
But this time giving their all was not quite enough.

They said one last prayer, thought one last thought.  
About the last one they kissed, not the last one they  
fought.

One last breath lifted that badge one last time with  
their chest.

Then their name was etched in stone alongside all the  
rest.

Now as you gaze at those names, neatly etched in  
stone.

Before you return to your job and your loved ones at  
home.

Feel free to remember their last full measure of  
devotion.

With a solemn prayer, a sharp salute, and a full  
measure of emotion.

To the dedicated officers and support staff all across  
this great province, I say thank you for your service.

1540

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further response?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm glad to stand today and  
speak in response to the minister's statement on National  
Police Week.

I would first like to recognize Stephen Reid, executive  
director of the Police Association of Ontario, and Con-  
stable Christine Lyons, from the Peel Regional Police  
Association, who have joined us today. Additionally, I  
would like to appreciate the police officers and front-line  
workers who keep us safe and secure across our com-  
munities. As NDP critic for community safety and  
correctional services, I'm pleased to welcome them and  
recognize police from across the province.

Today, as we know, is Peace Officers Memorial Day,  
and today we recognize that National Police Week is a  
week to focus on those who keep us safe and secure,  
protected and defended. It is when we stop and take the  
time to appreciate that we live in a safe society protected  
by laws and those who enforce them.

I grew up with both of my uncles in law enforcement.  
My uncle Doug grew up and ran away to join the  
Mounties, then came back to Ontario as an OPP officer  
and has just recently retired. My uncle Lorne was a  
police officer who worked with the Special Olympics  
torch run. I grew up understanding that police work was  
more than about policing or law enforcement; it was  
about community work, outreach and making our com-  
munities stronger, not just safer.

As an educator, I knew that our police were regular  
visitors in our school. They ran safety programs that ran  
the gamut of road safety, bicycle safety, drug awareness,  
online safety and cyberbullying. We had officers in our  
high school available to help, to mentor and to address  
issues. They were there building bridges with our youth,  
establishing a foundation of respect and understanding,  
and of dialogue, but they were building relationships.

I challenge this government to continue to build  
bridges with community and police partners so that  
police can better do their jobs and the community can  
better trust in the strength of the system as a whole.

Police see into all the corners of our communities.  
They see, they know, they do dangerous work and they  
do heartbreaking work. When we recognized our first  
responders recently on First Responders Day, I said that  
we get to know the great stories and we get to know the  
awful stories, but we will never know all the moments in  
between: all the painful decisions, the moments of joy  
and relief, the suffocating trauma and the terrible truths  
that officers carry.

Every community has local challenges and local  
success stories. In Oshawa, we have officers and teams  
that have been leading the way and collaborating with  
other jurisdictions on threats to safety like fentanyl, with  
the successful Patch for Patch exchange initiative, or  
Project Northern Spotlight, which has tackled human  
trafficking and exploitation. Across our province, there  
are tremendous initiatives being undertaken to keep us  
safe and secure, and we will never know the half of it.  
But we are appreciative of the work and the sacrifice,  
even if we can never measure it.

Our front-line officers are first responders who have  
chosen to serve the public. They chose a path of chal-  
lenge, service and sacrifice. That service and sacrifice,



however, should not come without support. I am glad this Legislature recognized and did something about the need for presumptive legislation when it comes to PTSD. Our officers need at least that support.

Police officers have also been telling us what they need to keep our communities secure and feeling secure, both in terms of safety and in terms of public confidence. We need to support our first responders and give them the tools and training they are asking for. As front-line officers, they have essentially become our psychologists and social workers. Police need this government to strengthen existing mental health supports in the community, to create effective programs, and to support substantial and appropriate mental health training for officers. Law enforcement will always need to evolve and re-evaluate in the face of changing societies, changing technologies, public involvement, demographics, threats and new drugs.

We challenge this government to work with police, community partners and the opposition to ensure that police receive the support, training and respect they need and deserve to do the invaluable work they do. Especially during this National Police Week, we sincerely appreciate our officers and cannot thank them enough.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments. It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### CURRICULUM

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank the outreach and social action committee of Wall Street United Church in Brockville for this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas for six years the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) listened to thousands of former students of residential schools and their families testify to the devastating legacy of this national policy of assimilation;

“Whereas the TRC calls upon ‘the federal, provincial and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with survivors, aboriginal peoples and educators, to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties and aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for kindergarten to grade 12 students’ (CA 62.1); and

“Whereas on July 15, 2015, Canada’s Premiers indicated their support for all 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action and said they would act on them in their own provinces and territories;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario urge the government of Ontario to fully implement such a curriculum for kindergarten through grade 12.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature in support and send it to the table with page Marthangi.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I’m pleased to read more petitions for the autism cuts that continuously flow into my office. It says:

“Don’t Balance the Budget on the Backs of Children with ASD.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

“Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

“Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

“Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

“Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

“Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation.”

I couldn’t agree with this more. I’m going to give it to page Samantha to bring to the Clerk.

## ELDER ABUSE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** A petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas today, there are more seniors 65 and over than children under the age of 15, both in Ontario and across Canada;

“Whereas there are currently more than two million seniors aged 65 and over—approximately 15% of the population and this number is expected to double in the next 25 years;....

“Whereas research showed that abuse against seniors takes many forms and is often perpetrated by family members;....

"Whereas Bill 148, if passed, will ensure seniors living in the community have the same protection and support as those seniors living in long-term-care facilities and retirement homes;

"Whereas Bill 148, if passed, will require regulated health professionals to report elder abuse or neglect to the public guardian and trustee office;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the members of the Ontario Legislative Assembly pass Bill 148, An Act to amend the Substitute Decisions Act, 1992 and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, requiring health professionals to report any reasonable suspicion that a senior living in the community is being abused or neglected to the public guardian and trustee office."

I fully support the petition. I will give my petition to page Grace.

### AUTOMOTIVE DEALERS

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 152, the Cutting Red Tape for Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2015 is a vital tool that supports Ontario's auto sector by cutting red tape for dealers and consumers when a vehicle is purchased or leased; and

"Whereas, in 2011, the province of Ontario conducted a pilot project on in-house vehicle licensing at two new car dealerships that was well received by the participants; and

"Whereas the province of Quebec has permitted automobile dealers to conduct in-house vehicle registrations since 2003, with 700 dealers currently participating;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario immediately pass Bill 152 into law, to promote Ontario's auto retail sector by cutting red tape for motor vehicle dealers and consumers to save them time and money."

I agree with the contents. I will affix my signature, date it and provide it to page Faiz.

1550

### ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

"Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual

total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

"Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

"Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

"Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research."

I fully agree. I'll sign it and give it to Leah to bring up to the front.

### LUNG HEALTH

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas lung disease affects 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario;

"Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

"In the Ontario Lung Association report, Your Lungs, Your Life, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and that this figure is estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

"One in five Ontario schoolchildren has asthma;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To allow for deputations on MPP Kathryn McGarry's private member's bill, Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a lung health advisory council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues; and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario lung health action plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

"Once debated at committee to expedite Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, through the committee stage and back to the Legislature for third and final reading; and to immediately call for a vote on Bill 41 and to seek royal assent immediately upon its passage."

I approve of this petition—



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you very much.

### SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas demonstrative schools in Ontario provide incredible necessary support for children with special education needs; and

“Whereas the current review by the government of Ontario of demonstrative schools and other special education programs has placed a freeze on student intake and the hiring of teaching staff;

“Whereas children in need of specialized education and their parents require access to demonstrative schools and other essential support services;

“Whereas the freezing of student intake is unacceptable as it leaves the most vulnerable students behind;

“Whereas this situation could result in the closure of many specialized education programs, depriving children with special needs of their best opportunity to learn;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately reinstate funding streams for demonstrative schools and other specialized education services for the duration of the review and to commit to ensuring every student in need is allowed the chance to receive an education and achieve their potential.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Brendan.

### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dog Tales is a world-renowned dog rescue in King City, Ontario, that specializes in the care, rehabilitation and adoption of abused, abandoned and neglected dogs. Since opening in 2014, Dog Tales has found homes for more than 500 dogs in need;

“Whereas Dog Tales employs a full-time staff of 40, including experts in dog care, rehabilitation and training, and has an operating budget in excess of \$1 million per year;

“Whereas the Ontario Dog Owners’ Liability Act prevents certain breeds from being owned or housed within the province which has resulted in the unnecessary euthanasia of thousands of innocent dogs and puppies, despite numerous studies proving that this legislation has not been effective in reducing the overall number of dog bites in the province since implementation;

“Whereas sections 6(d) and 20(2)(e) of the Dog Owners’ Liability Act allow the provincial government to designate bodies within Ontario so that dogs affected by the legislation can have a place to go when in need;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Direct the Lieutenant Governor in Council to grant Dog Tales a designation under the Dog Owners’ Liability Act that will allow breeds affected by Ontario’s breed-specific legislation to be housed at their rescue for transition to out-of-province adoption or permanent sanctuary.”

I wholeheartedly support this, affix my name to it and send it with page Samantha.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly from residents in my riding.

“Update Ontario Fluoridation Legislation.

“Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that community water fluoridation is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations, including the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ontario Dental Association; and

“Whereas recent experience in Canadian cities that have removed fluoride from drinking water has led directly to a dramatic increase in tooth decay; and

“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care urges support for amending the Fluoridation Act to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory; and

“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing urges support for the removal of provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario before the end of the first session of the current Ontario Parliament.”

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government’s mismanagement of the energy sector;

“Whereas the billion-dollar gas plants cancellation, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020; and

“Whereas the Liberal government wasted \$2 billion on the flawed smart meter program; and

"Whereas the recent announcement to implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program will see average household hydro bills increase an additional \$137 per year starting in 2016; and

"Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

"Whereas home heating and electricity are a necessity for families in Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario's power consumers, including families, farmers and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity."

I totally agree with this petition. I'll affix my signature to it and send it to the table with Aadil.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

"Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

"Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

"Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

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"Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

"Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

"Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation."

I will affix my signature to this petition and give it to page Spencer.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The time for petitions has expired.

### OPPOSITION DAY

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, our motion states that,

(a) The Legislative Assembly of Ontario accepts that autism does not end at the age of five;

(b) The Legislative Assembly of Ontario accepts that intensive behavioural intervention—IBI—therapy is statistically effective at improving the development of autistic children of any age; and

(c) The Legislative Assembly of Ontario supports restoring funding for IBI therapy for children over the age of five.

This is addressed to the Premier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Brown has moved opposition day motion number 5. Mr. Brown.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** I'm happy to rise in support of this motion. The motion provides an opportunity for the government to show Ontarians they are listening and, importantly, reacting to the need to restore funding for IBI therapy for children over the age of five. Some 2,000 children will no longer be eligible for therapy if the government permits this decision to hold. That's why this motion is so important.

I can tell you, our entire PC caucus was shocked and saddened by the government's decision to cut IBI therapy for children five years and older. Just imagine that: Over 2,000 children will be left behind.

Since this government announced their misguided policy, letters have been pouring into my office with heart-wrenching stories of children with autism who spent years on the wait-list. These families were counting on IBI as a hope for their child's future, only to be told that they won't be getting the treatment they've been waiting years for. Many feel they have nowhere to turn. They feel abandoned.

Mr. Speaker, what's most shocking about the government's misguided policies is that IBI therapy has been a proven treatment for children over five. The impact and progress made by children is amazing and undeniable. I received an email from a woman from Simcoe county whose eight-year-old son, Sebastian, has autism. Sebastian started IBI in January after waiting three and a half years for treatment. In only three months of treatment he was able to speak, growing from two-word sentences to five-word sentences. He was even able to say, "Mom, I love you," for the very first time. His mother said that it has been a dream come true to see Sebastian speaking and interacting with his family. Sebastian will be assessed again in October and will likely be denied further IBI treatment because he is older than five. His parents are heartbroken. In reading their letter, you can't comprehend why this government is not doing the right thing.

Another woman told me about her son, Charlie, in Toronto, who is six years old and has autism. Before



beginning therapy, Charlie was almost non-verbal, was not toilet trained, was unable to feed himself, and was easily triggered by ambient noise. Charlie finally began IBI therapy two short months ago. As a result of the therapy he is beginning to respond to sentences and he is now able to eat on his own. Now they will no longer receive funding for therapy. In her words—these are the family's words: "I cannot describe the anguish of spending years watching my child fall behind while waiting for help, only to have hope ripped away when it finally arrives." How can this government do that to Charlie?

This morning, in question period, I talked about the story of four-year-old Mason from Burlington, four-year-old Lila from Etobicoke and five-year-old Daniel from Richmond Hill, all of whom have autism. These children may never get the opportunity to receive IBI treatment. Their families struggle to understand how the Liberal government can turn their backs on their children. They wonder if they'll ever experience their child look at them and have the ability to say, "I love you."

With private IBI treatment estimated at a cost of approximately \$50,000 a year, the government's changes to funding will only pay for a few weeks of this life-changing therapy. To assume most families can afford IBI shows just how out of touch this government really is.

The reality is that this government is making cuts to IBI because of years of Liberal scandal, waste, and mismanagement. These cuts are prevalent throughout the health care system and this is yet another example of an essential service the Wynne Liberals are cutting. Instead of taking accountability, this government is attempting to balance the budget on the backs of some of our most vulnerable.

The Liberal government needs to start listening to Ontarians and re-evaluate their priorities. That is what Ontarians expect from the government.

As a result of the government's desperation, not only is the government ignoring the pleas of affected families, the government is ignoring the advice of experts. Last week, Dr. Ian Dawe, chair of the government's Autism Spectrum Disorder Clinical Expert Committee, spoke out against the government's cuts.

Although Dr. Dawe praised the positive impact IBI therapy can have on children with autism, he admitted to an affected parent that there is no evidence that children over five would not benefit from IBI. He also said that the government's changes to autism funding are not what their panel recommended. He has voiced his concerns directly to the Premier, yet the Wynne Liberal government is unwilling to listen to experts and unwilling to listen to families. It is a sad day in our Legislature when this government is more concerned with the bottom line than with children and families dealing with autism. Unacceptable.

Another problem is that no one trusts this government. No one is buying their lines. No one trusts the fate of a child with autism in the hands of this government. Even

though the government has kicked these children off the IBI wait-list, they cannot wish them away. Children over the age of five still have special needs the province must address. The wait-list for a less intensive form of therapy, ABA, remains at approximately 14,000 children, and it's clear the Wynne Liberals don't have a real solution or a plan for those kicked off the IBI wait-list. These children have no other option.

Voting in support of this motion will be a first step by the Liberal government to demonstrate that they are willing to change, that after hearing expert advice, after hearing families, after actually talking to Ontarians, it's never too late to do the right thing, and that we must, for the sake of these children, do the right thing.

The Ontario PC caucus has been very clear, and I will state unequivocally: Autism does not end at five.

No child should be left behind in receiving the necessary support they deserve. Children with autism and their families deserve better from this government, and that is why we have introduced this motion. The Ontario PC Party believes that every single person in Ontario should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We will continue to stand with families and children affected by autism and we have continued to pressure the Liberal members to reverse their decision and allow children over five years old to access IBI therapy.

Sadly, it would appear the Liberal government will only listen if you buy a \$10,000 ticket to their fundraisers. These families don't have \$10,000 to participate in this pay-to-play environment the government has created.

I urge the Liberal members to show families in the gallery today and families throughout the province that they are listening and that you don't have to show up at a Liberal fundraiser. Do the right thing. You know families depend on this. Experts know that families depend on this. This is an opportunity for Liberal MPPs to do the right thing, to support this motion and say they stand with families, they stand with children.

This is an opportunity. Liberal MPPs have an opportunity to potentially change the lives of so many incredible children. Before the Liberal members vote this afternoon, I want you to think of Mason, of Lila, of Daniel. I want you to think of the devastated families, too many to count, who are being forced to sell their homes to get a chance to provide the IBI treatment their child deserves.

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The Ontario PC caucus is urging you, begging you, to restore funding for IBI therapy for children over the age of five. The future of these children is in this government's hands. Do the right thing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's my honour to rise as leader of the Ontario NDP caucus and as a mother to support this opposition day motion. I have to start by saying that I find it very unfortunate and regrettable that we even have to have this debate in the House. Let's not



forget that it was this very Premier who said that every person with autism “deserves ... support, and has mine.”

I guess the Liberal version of supporting children with autism is removing them from life-changing, evidence-based therapy simply based on the year that they were born. For those of us on this side of the chamber, that is just plain wrong, which is what former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty said the last time the government was forced to reverse course on age caps, back in 2006.

Not too long after that, I was named the NDP critic for children and youth services. This was before I was the leader. I took over from the very passionate MPP Shelley Martel, who—just to take a quick trip down memory lane—this government actually took to court. The Liberal government took MPP Shelley Martel to court because she was doing her job fighting for vulnerable kids. They spent money fighting her in court instead of investing in therapy for children with autism.

By the way, the education minister of the day, who was supposed to clean up the Liberals’ act when it came to autism and IBI and ABA therapy, was none other than the person who is currently occupying the Premier’s chair in this province. She was the education minister from 2006 to 2010. It was her job to make sure that kids weren’t languishing on wait-lists, and here we are with them still languishing on wait-lists.

Around that time, I actually had Bruce McIntosh, who’s here today in the gallery and is president of the Ontario Autism Coalition, on a panel talking about this very same issue—10 years ago. Can you imagine that? All those years ago, parents were having this exact same fight. I want to speak to those parents right now. I’m in awe. I’m in awe of their strength, of their dedication, of their passion, of their perseverance. As a mother, I understand. I understand fighting for your children to have the best opportunities to succeed. I understand not giving up: not giving up the fight, not giving up on your kids.

These families have come to Queen’s Park three times already in just the past couple of months. Over the years, these families have come countless times to fight for their children, to fight against a government that for 13 years has been in power and has done nothing except kick kids off of a waiting list to get IBI therapy. To ensure that the voices of their children could be heard, these families have come time and time again to this chamber. To ensure that the voices of their children are respected, these families have come time and time again to this Legislature and to these front lawns.

They’re fighting a government who has pulled the rug out from under them. It is simply “too cruel,” in the words of the *Toronto Star*, to wait and wait on a list for therapy that doctors and clinicians have told you would make all the difference and would have a profound impact on your child’s life, that would allow your children to communicate with the outside world, that would allow your child to express in some way how they are feeling, and then, with a stroke of the Premier’s pen, to be told your child will never receive access to that

therapy, to feel like your heart has been broken, has been torn right out of your chest, and, in the words of Kristen Ellison, be forced to mourn the loss of your child’s potential.

Think of those words, Speaker: to be forced to mourn the loss of your child’s potential. That’s what this government is doing to these moms and dads and their children.

In the case of Heather Bourdon, and thousands of parents like her, to sell your house, to sell your possessions, everything you have, to move your family of five people into a one-bedroom apartment just to make sure that your child can have the best possible start—families in Ontario should not have to sell everything they own to pay for life-changing, essential therapy for their children. This government has a duty to provide children with autism with the services that they need.

Speaker, the Liberal legacy on the autism file is nothing short of shameful and disgraceful. The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, whose job it is to advocate for vulnerable kids, has called out this government, saying that it’s “a mug’s game,” what they’re doing right now with their change in policy, that this decision was about getting rid of wait-lists and not about what’s best for children.

Michael Barrett, president of the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association, has told this government that “It’s never too late to correct a mistake.”

Labour, teachers, experts and newspaper editorial boards have all come out against this plan. Even organizations the Liberals thought were onside, like Quick-Start, have issued statements.

Perhaps the most damning is the chair of the government’s own expert panel, Dr. Ian Dawe, who has echoed what New Democrats have been saying all along: “What the government has funded was not what we recommended.” I want to repeat that: “What the government has funded was not what we recommended.” This is the chair of their expert panel on autism therapy and funding.

Our critic, Monique Taylor, has asked the Minister of Children and Youth Services countless times to show us where this report that was issued says that IBI doesn’t work for children over the age of five, and she can’t because—guess what?—the report doesn’t say that. How can this government possibly dig in on these changes when the experts they’re depending on have come out against them?

Speaker, I just want to say that this government and this minister cannot claim to be following the science while they are actively ignoring the experts behind the science. It doesn’t work that way. I know this might shock the members across the chamber, but they don’t know more than the clinicians, the experts, or the parents, for that matter. This Premier does not know more than the experts, than the clinicians and the parents. She just doesn’t. It’s really insulting for them to pretend that they actually do. It’s insulting every time a member on the opposition benches gets up and reads the story of a desperate and heartbroken family and the Liberal members



yell and heckle. It is insulting that that happens in this chamber, Speaker.

It's insulting that the government ignored the actual suggestions of the expert panel, but then claimed to be basing their policy on it. What is the point of appointing an expert panel if you're just going to arrogantly ignore whatever they have to say anyway? What is the point?

The report says that IBI needs to be given for a year for it to be effective. So what does this government do? Removes kids after six months or, in the case of thousands of kids, after zero months.

You can't pick and choose the facts. It's time for the Liberal government to do what's right. It's time for them to stop worrying about themselves and worry about the needs of families across this province. We're talking about vulnerable children. We're talking about very expensive therapy that families can't afford to pay out of their own pockets, and that's when they turn to government or when they should be able to turn to government for that help to give their kids an opportunity to be able to communicate with the outside world, to be able to reach their own potential. That's what they rely on their government to do.

Children who teach us so much about unconditional love, children who teach us about acceptance, children who teach us about a new way to look at the world: That's who we're talking about when we talk about these children. They teach us about things like kindness and compassion. They deserve so much better than the hand they are being dealt by this government.

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I'm on the record now, and I want to be clear with families here today and across this province: Parents and kids know that autism does not end at five, and I know its treatment should not either. You have my word that New Democrats will stand with you through this fight, just like we have stood with you for well over a decade. We will not give up, and we know that you won't give up either. We know that you and your children deserve so much better. Children with autism deserve access to the therapy they need, regardless of their age.

I'm going to end by quoting myself, Speaker, back in 2009, when I said, "These children and these families cannot wait any longer for this government to get its act together when it comes to the autism file." And here we are, seven years later—seven years later.

This government has been in power for 13 years. Dalton McGuinty was dragging these families through the courts back then, Speaker, dragging these families through the courts. These families were saying, "Just because our kids reach a certain age doesn't mean they don't deserve therapy. It doesn't mean they don't deserve an education." They were right then, and they are right today as well.

Speaker, there's a number of other members of my caucus who are going to say a few words, but I do thank you for the moment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I do want to thank the opposition for giving me a chance to rise today to clarify a number of elements of the new autism program and dispel some myths about recent changes to the Ontario Autism Program.

I'd also like to welcome and acknowledge the families and the children who have joined us today, as well as the autism action groups and associations who are here. I have met with a number of them, and I look forward to continuing to meet with and hear from families and association advocates.

I want to say off the top, Speaker—I've said it here in this Legislature, and I want to say it to the opposition specifically—I agree that autism does not end at age five. As both the Premier and I have said in this Legislature, our government is committed to improving the lives of the 40,000 children and youth with autism in Ontario, and the lives of their families as well.

In recent years, accessing therapy and services has become challenging and sometimes confusing. Wait times are unacceptably long. Spaces for therapy are too few in number, and the way we have historically delivered services has not been responsive to the unique needs of each child with autism.

Without action now, Speaker, we know that challenges will only grow. Children will be stranded on wait-lists for years, not months. Therapy that should come sooner will be delayed. Fixing these challenges is what motivates our government and what motivates me personally, as the minister: to help families, to ease their burden, to increase opportunities for children with autism, and to get them the services they require when they need them.

For all these reasons, Speaker, we are creating the new Ontario Autism Program with an historic investment of \$333 million to improve and expand children's autism services over the next five years. With this new funding, 16,000 more children will receive the critical interventions they need. Let me repeat one more time: Our investment, Speaker—a third of a billion dollars in autism services—will ensure that 16,000 more children receive the services they need when they need it and how they need it.

In two years, we expect the wait-list to be cut in half. In five years, our goal is to cut the wait times to less than six months.

Most important of all, this new program ensures supports and therapy will be tailored to the children and their individual developmental needs. In the new program, all children, regardless of their age, will be assessed upon entry and then provided the services and the level of therapeutic intensity that is best suited for them. For the first time in Ontario, we are developing a program that has a continuum of care and services that personalizes care to the unique needs of every child with autism.

When the new program is fully implemented, families will find services much easier to access and navigate, and families will find that the new program is responsive to



the needs of children irrespective of age. Based on the work that we've done with experts and with the families themselves, we believe that this new program will deliver what those living with autism need. It will fix the problems that we're facing today, and it will keep those problems from growing greater.

This is our vision and what we're going to work towards for the new program. As we design and implement the new program, we'll be considering how best to deliver those services, including looking at the direct funding model. I've heard from families and experts on this. We're going to work hard, get as much advice as we can, and we want to get this right.

We also recognize that, with this level of investment, we have to work through a period of adjustment as the new program is implemented. The transition, though difficult, will not affect most families. That's important to emphasize. It will not affect most families of the 40,000 children living with autism. There are roughly 2,200 families across the province, however, who will feel some effect during this two-year period. In the main, these families with children currently age five or older on the wait-list for intensive services will be better supported.

I know change can be challenging, and people naturally want to hear exactly how it will affect their child. For this reason, we're paying specific attention to each and every one of these 2,200 families on a case-by-case basis. They will—and, in some cases, have already—hear directly from their service provider about what these changes mean for them. In addition, these families will all receive funding to help families purchase the services that they need where and how they need them right away.

In short, we'll work hand in glove with families. We'll maintain close contact as these changes are implemented to ensure that these families are hearing from us and that we're hearing from them, that we're aware of what they're experiencing and that we are able to monitor those effects on a continuous basis.

It won't be simple and it won't be without challenge. But the transition to the program will leave us with a set of services that support the work far better and therapy tailored to better meet the needs of individual children, with 16,000 new spaces and shorter waiting lists. In short, Speaker, it will better serve all children and youth living with autism and, in doing so, it will better serve us all.

Again, I want to thank the families who are here today, and I want to say to you that I am committed to supporting you and your children.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** There are so many areas that I could delve into after the minister's speech, but I'm only going to leave you with one: What are these families supposed to do for the next two years while you try to get this right?

I want to talk about a family who actually isn't going to be impacted by this announcement, but it drove home

what happens when we mess up a file, and the autism file is an example of where we have messed up from the very beginning. I'm just going to read from this woman who lives in Dufferin county.

"Premier Wynne

"I am writing this letter in response to the recent cuts and changes to the IBI program for autistic children by your government and to voice my deepest concern regarding this move. I find it difficult to believe that a treatment that has been proven to work is being cut....

"I know from experience what life is like for these parents and their children now and what it will look like in the future. You see, Premier, I have lived it every day for the past 39 years. I am a parent of an adult non-verbal adult son with autism who lives at home with us, his parents. If this treatment had been available 39 years ago, I would have fought with everything in me to have him enrolled! I speak from first-hand knowledge when I say I know what impact this disorder can have on children and their families.

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"My son cannot speak, write or read and maybe functions at about an age three level. He lives in a world with no voice and where sounds, touch are painful. What I wouldn't give to have him say, 'Mom,' for him to have even some of the things we all take for granted. He will have to rely on others his whole life for his most basic needs, his safety and care. As parents you hope and pray that when you are gone that those entrusted to care for him do that and pray he is not abused. This is a constant worry. This is the future you are asking the parents of these children to endure.

"You have the opportunity to change the path for these children with autism. Madam Premier, there is a saying, 'You have to walk in someone else's shoes to fully understand what it is like.' I hope you never have to find out what those shoes are like. It becomes much more personal when you have someone you love and care about walking this path. The cost to society can't be measured just by money spent for benefits and programs. It is much more far reaching than that! It is also the hardships financially, and emotional, these families face. These costs have to be factored in as well.

"Premier, families are separating because parents cannot cope, they are struggling financially to provide care, their income is being impacted as they try to figure out how to be parents to their special needs-children—adults. And all that entails. They are on call every minute of the day and night, 24/7, 365 days a year. They are caregivers, parents to other children, grandparents and also have to deal with the other everyday stuff everyone has to deal with on a regular basis...."

The letter goes on, Speaker, but I'm going to close with her plea to Premier Wynne: "I ask, Premier, that you reconsider funding for these children. Make a difference. You, Premier, have the power to change the course of these children's lives. Please use it!!!" That's a letter from a woman in Mulmur.

It amazes me that we are couching this in some kind of, "It will be better when...." These announcements are



already in effect. May 1 is when the change happened, and yet we're talking about, "In two years it will be better; just be patient." Well, you know what? In 2003, the leader of the Liberal Party said that the "lack of government-funded IBI treatment for autistic children over six is unfair and discriminatory." That was Dalton McGuinty in 2003. Have we learned nothing since then?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** As our leader has said, it's truly regrettable and unfortunate that we have to have a motion in the House today to tell the Liberals that autism doesn't end at five. It's not a complicated concept, but the Liberals have decided to dig in on an issue that impacts our most vulnerable kids.

As I speak today, I hold the thought of all of those children whose lives are being impacted by this government's callous decision to take away IBI therapy from them, especially Justin and Anthony, whose mothers were here with me back in November. They came to share their stories of waiting on a wait-list for therapy that they knew would have life-changing impacts. How did this government respond? By ensuring that children over five would never receive access to publicly funded IBI therapy.

They tried to make a good-news announcement. They tried to hide the fact that they were taking essential therapy away from kids. But you can't hide from parents. They are the warriors for their children, and I'm proud to stand with them, as I know the member from Dufferin-Caledon, the opposition critic, is as well.

Since the government is claiming that these decisions were based on science and facts, let's talk about the facts. In Ontario, children, on average, are diagnosed with ASD at the age of four—Speaker, that's right, I said four—and the cut-off for intensive therapy is five. Does that make any sense? I guess if you're trying to save money, it does. Or if you're just trying to make a good-news announcement and you have made it clear that you don't care about the impact that it will have on some of Ontario's most vulnerable children.

Let's be clear: We know why the cut-off was set at the age of five. It wasn't because the expert panel said it should be. It was because, as of October 2015, more than 90% of children receiving IBI were over the age of five. So you would only have to pay for 7% of the children to remain in service, and that's shameful.

Do you know what else is shameful? Actively ignoring the advice of your own expert panel and then calling the truth "unfortunate and regrettable." The report, just in case the government hasn't read it, says that IBI should be given for a minimum of one year for it to be effective. So what does this government do? It gives families \$8,000, which is less than two months of IBI therapy, which surely doesn't fit in with what the experts have said. Parents now know that there are positive impacts of the IBI on their children, and then it will be ripped away from them. That's cruel and unfair.

Let's talk about kids who start IBI before the age of five. Their parents are being told that they will only have

six months of treatment, since once they turn five they are no longer eligible. The experts say—again, if the opposition members haven't read the report, I highly recommend it—that kids should start IBI before five and receive it for a minimum of a year, so as long as it is still clinically beneficial. You can't just pick and choose the facts and misrepresent the science. You can't claim that the experts behind the scenes and behind the science have it all wrong.

This government has it wrong, and they're too arrogant to admit it. Arrogance is getting in the way of children getting access to the services they need. If all you can say about the chair of the panel coming out and saying you got it wrong is that he is no longer the chair, then you really have no legitimate answer. The Liberals think they know better than the experts and the clinicians.

Let's talk about what this really means, though. I've spoken to hundreds of parents who tell me stories that break my heart, about what not having access to therapy looks like for them. They send me pictures and videos of children who cannot tell them what's wrong when something is very clearly wrong. They feel helpless and they have nowhere to turn. They tell me how much they would give up just to ensure that their children have what they need. The government shouldn't be forcing parents to give up everything just to get access to basic health care. These children deserve access.

I want the members opposite to think about what they would do if this government was trying to steal services that their children needed. Would they just sit down and let it happen? I doubt it. They should empathize with these parents who come here today and day after day just to make a point, because I'm sure that they would do the same. They need to step up today and have a spine to stand against a government who are making a bad decision. Will they be remembered for taking away essential life-changing therapy from kids with autism or will they be remembered as elected officials who don't have the gall to stand up to their own government and fight for vulnerable kids? It's really up to them.

Parents are frustrated with a government that won't answer questions, that won't meet with parents, that makes decisions without properly consulting. I share in their frustration. I'm frustrated with all this spin and not ensuring that all the children have access to the services they need. I'm frustrated that the voices of children who would have thrived through IBI are not being listened to, not being heard, and not being respected.

As a youth with special needs at the provincial advocate's recent event said, "We don't actually want you fighting over us, we just want you to provide us with what we need." The Liberal members need to hear that. Provide children with what they need. Please make this decision about children. Put children first. Do what's right.

I know that they're divided on this issue. I know that many of them have privately told parents how uncomfortable they are with all of this. Now is the time. I know IBI is expensive but the cost of inaction is far greater.



Two years of IBI at \$50,000 is a drop in the bucket compared to the cost of 60 years in a group home. It's fair to be proactive and it makes sense.

To experts who have gone over and above and come out vocally against these changes, thank you. Thank you for raising your voice for this injustice. Thank you for not accepting a government that wants you to be more concerned about population ethics rather than individual ethics. Every child matters. Every child deserves the support that they need to thrive.

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To the parents who are here again today, I'm sorry that you have to come here day after day. Just know that I am with you, and I promise to fight with you, and for you and your children. It is my privilege to fight for your children's rights. Meeting and interacting with children on the spectrum has taught me so much. It has left a lasting impression on my life. I will not let this government hurt your children. Don't give up the fight, because no government knows better than parents when it comes to what is best for their children.

I will end by imploring members on the government side to please do the right thing: Vote in support of this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I'm very pleased to be able to rise to speak to this motion today.

One out of 68 children—one out of 68—is diagnosed with autism in Canada. That number has grown by 100% in the last decade. It's the most common and fastest-growing neurological disorder in Canada.

Governments can't sit idly by. You can't sit on your hands while these numbers continue to grow. By introducing this opposition day motion today, that is what the opposition wants us to do. They want the government to not react. They want the government to stay with the status quo. Well, the status quo isn't good enough.

One of the scariest statements in the English language—I've said this before—goes like this: "This is the way we have always done it." Well, as the Premier, the Minister of Children and Youth Services and many others have stated, the way of the past was leaving too many children behind. That is why we introduced this new program to ensure that 16,000 new spaces are created to get children off the wait-list to get the service they need.

Let's be clear about what this opposition day motion means. Unlike some of the emails that went out to families from members of the opposition, this vote, at the end of the day, isn't a confidence vote. That vote was the 2016 budget, and of course the opposition voted against it and the new services for children with autism, which isn't shocking. That wasn't shocking.

But let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, let's be very clear about what they voted against. It was the opposition that voted against a third of a billion dollars, \$333 million. They voted against creating 16,000 new spots for services for children with autism. That's \$333 million on

top of the already-existing \$190 million that is there for services.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Exactly.

So rather than looking at ways of improving the system, rather than looking at ways of making it better and seeing the third of a billion dollars as progress toward improving the lives of thousands of individuals and families, they are using today's motion to stir emotions and cause more concern for families, concerns these families do not need.

None of us in this House knows what it's like to be the parent of an autistic child. None of us know that. I can empathize—

*Interruption.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I would like to remind all the guests to please refrain. You are guests in here. We would ask that you listen intently to the debate.

Please continue.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** The guest was right: None of us actually knows what it's like to be the parent of an autistic child. I can only empathize, and I did it for 15 years of my life. For 15 years I was a foster parent, I was a respite provider, I was a front-line service provider. I can understand what it is like, but I can only empathize. I have stood there with parents when their child was having an incident. We've got the scars; parents have the scars on their faces. I have the scars on my face, right? We've had the plates thrown at us. But you know what? We've also been there when we've seen the good things that happen. When you see your child progress, when you see and hear that first word, those are the things that we see on this side of the House as paramount and as important, and that is done through ABA, applied behavioural analysis. Evidence-based strategies provide the consistency to children with autism.

It's completely understandable for parents to be very concerned when they hear from the opposition parties that those services are being cut. Well, there are no cuts. It's only the opposition that would see \$333 million, or a third of a billion dollars, as a cut. The old system was completely unsustainable. As stated, one out of 68 children in this country is diagnosed with autism every year, so sticking with the status quo would have continued to see too many children waiting years for vital services and missing significant development milestones.

Our plan, the plan the opposition voted against, will see kids get off the wait-list. This motion, if implemented, would deny children with autism access to these new and improved services. It would deny them shorter wait times and individualized, custom care. This motion brought forward would ensure kids are put back on the wait-lists, seeing these wait-lists grow to over five years by 2018. As I mentioned at the outset, one out of 68 children is diagnosed—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.



**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** It's the fastest-growing and most commonly diagnosed neurological disorder in Canada, so we're acting as a government. We are not sitting on our hands.

This government agrees with parents and advocates that autism doesn't end at five. It's preposterous that the opposition would think that this is something that should be debated. But most importantly, we recognize this is a lifespan diagnosis, and that's why there is no age cut-off for services under the new program. In the new Ontario Autism Program—and let me emphasize this—all children with a diagnosis, including those five years old or over, will receive better services sooner that are customized to meet the individual needs, including those who require intensive therapies and interventions.

For decades, this is what families have been asking for: individual service plans, personalized service plans. That's why we acted with a historic investment in children, an investment of an additional \$333 million. That's on top, as I said before, of the \$190 million, creating 16,000 spots for children and youth with autism, regardless of age. That's good news to thousands of families.

It is also paramount that families hear that ABA services, as we know them, will change drastically in the new autism program. In the new Ontario Autism Program, intensity of services will be more flexible and individualized than in the current ABA program and based on the child's needs—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Member from Hamilton Mountain.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** —the number of hours per week, and the number of goals to be personalized with the clinician to ensure that each child receives a continuum of service responsive to their needs. So when the opposition claims that ABA services are being cut, they're not providing the right information to families.

The new Ontario Autism Program also ensures that those currently receiving IBI services—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** —will see that continue. No child currently receiving services will see those services taken away. Even though the opposition will try and say otherwise, letters from service providers and from the ministry's regional offices outline that. You will also hear from service providers and from regional offices that if your child is five and currently on a wait-list and does not have service, contracts are now starting to be signed to provide \$8,000 for immediate purchase of service. After that direct funding allotment is spent, these children will benefit from the new continuum of care and will receive other publicly funded rehabilitative supports, including ABA. So the unfounded claim that the government is cutting IBI and ABA services is just that: unfounded.

1650

Once the new Ontario Autism Program is fully implemented, the distinction between ABA and IBI will no

longer exist as they will be combined to make one program that will be better in quality, flexibility of services, length and intensity of services. We are the only province that differentiates between ABA and IBI. British Columbia calls it EIBI. Do you know what we're going to do here, Mr. Speaker? I know that parents don't care what it's called. They could call it ABA or call it XYZ.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Member from Hamilton Mountain, second time. You missed the first time because you were speaking.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Parents want to ensure that their child is getting the right service at the right time with the right intensity and that's what this new program will do. It provides that for children with autism.

While ABA is a profound service that makes a difference in the lives of so many on the spectrum, it's not the only service out there. Children over the age of five are eligible to receive a variety of government-funded programs, including any level of intensity of service deemed needed by their clinician—let me repeat that again—any level of intensity of service deemed needed by their clinician in the new OAP program: current ABA services, respite services, speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, mental health services, physical therapists, school supports, March break camps, summer camps and so much more.

So let's be clear: The new Ontario Autism Program is there to make lives better. Nothing has been cut, as the opposition claims. We have only added service.

That's why it's paramount that I address point (c) of this motion. Point (c) reads the following: "The Legislative Assembly of Ontario supports restoring funding for IBI therapy for children over the age of five."

It is critical for our government that we do not focus on age but, rather, a life-span approach to autism, working with partner ministries to pilot programs that will help kids with ASD transition into adulthood. As we said all along, autism doesn't end at five, and it surely doesn't on your 18th birthday.

Sadly, for adults with ASD, the unemployment rate is over 80%, and that is something that must change, as well. While we are working with stakeholders to address that currently, the changes that we are making now in the new OAP will help in lowering that number to ensure that today's children become active participants in our province and in our communities.

That is why we are creating a program that will deliver the right service to children, regardless of age, regardless of intensity. We will deliver a personalized and individualized program for children with autism.

This motion brought forward by the official opposition does nothing but stir fear in parents and stakeholders. It does nothing to recognize that more needs to be done. That is why I cannot vote in favour of it. We are already doing so much more than what this motion calls for. We will not sit on our hands while one in 68 are diagnosed and are in need of service. We will not continue to have children sit on wait-lists. We will act, we will listen and



we will make the lives of families and individuals living with autism better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'm pleased to speak on behalf of our province's autistic children and their families. I'm happy to do it, and I know that all members of the PC caucus and the NDP caucus are, as well.

We have to speak up for these individuals, because the government certainly doesn't care about them. We are debating this motion today because the Liberal government recently announced its new autism programming. Unfortunately, these changes limit intensive behavioural intervention therapy to children under five years of age, so if your child is five or older and IBI is working, that's just too bad; your child no longer qualifies for the therapy.

The children and youth services minister says that this new program is based on expert advice, and that the age window of two to four is the best time to focus on IBI therapy. While it may be expert advice, it's flawed advice, nonetheless. I say that it's flawed because moms and dads across this province say that it's flawed, and they are the greatest experts of all.

Autism does not end at five, nor should IBI. Thousands of people have demanded that the government not go ahead with this change, but in true Liberal fashion, they know what's best and no one on the government side of this House is listening. The Liberals like to change who can access IBI therapy because it allows them to play a numbers game. Sadly, that game involves our children. Suddenly, a whole lot of children aged five and older don't have access to provincially funded IBI. Using the numbers from the Toronto Sun, the move affects 1,377 children five years and older who are already receiving IBI, 835 children in that age group who are on the wait-list, and a further 1,331 who are expected to turn five while they're still on the wait-list.

This leads me to talk about Adam Laver. He's an eight-year-old boy who lives in Beeton. Adam's parents applied to get on the province's IBI waiting list in May 2013. Now, because of the rule changes, Adam will never get provincial support for IBI, and that's sad, because if he had qualified, he'd get a minimum of 20 hours per week.

At any rate, despite all of this, Adam's parents put him in private IBI in August 2014. They've been paying a staggering \$1,200 a month for almost two years. That's a lot of money; that's a mortgage payment for many people in my riding. For that amount of money, Adam gets nine hours of therapy a week. His mother, Nancy, told me he's doing well on the nine hours. He's a different kid. With the limited amount he gets, he's doing fantastic. He now talks in eight-to-10-word sentences. Before, it was two to three words a sentence.

Adam's parents know how expensive IBI is because they've been paying for it out of their own pockets. If they could get the IBI support from the province that their son deserves, developmentally he'd be even further along.

No one is arguing that IBI isn't expensive. It's a lot of money, but it makes a world of difference for the children who receive it and it needs to be a priority for this government. If we don't do everything in our power to help these children, then we are not the caring society we purport to be. We are letting these children fall behind, and that will cost us so much more in so many ways in the future.

The government needs to do what's right and restore IBI funding.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Be seated, please.

Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Although it's unfortunate that I have to get up to speak to this, I'm glad that I do have an opportunity to lend my voice. I'm going to look at this from a slightly different lens than has been brought up so far. I'm going to talk about the education sector, as the member from Sudbury touched on it.

He also liked to talk about what the NDP do or do not support, so I'd like to clarify what we do or do not support. We certainly do not support kicking kids aged five and over who have autism off a list for service, so let's be clear about that.

Also to the member from Sudbury, we don't support a government that, over the last three years, has committed over \$1 billion to the education sector and has not actually forwarded that money to that sector or spent it on the children in the education system.

We certainly do not support a government that, this year alone, has cut \$8 million in special education funding—funding specifically for children like those with autism. They've cut that from 25 school boards—\$8 million. They're already starving school boards of money for special education needs. They are only compounding that problem.

I'd like to speak about some of the quotes coming out of the education sector. Just last week, there was a quote from Lynn McLaughlin, who is the superintendent of special education for the Greater Essex County District School Board, the public school board in Windsor. She said, "We're concerned because there's still so many questions." This government is not even forwarding information to the school boards to let them know what the plan is or if there's funding coming in order to support these children once they're cut out of service.

I'd also like to share, from the education workers, from CUPE, "'This is devastating for the 30,000 families with children who have ASD diagnoses,' said Terri Preston, chair of CUPE Ontario's school boards coordinating committee. 'It comes at a time when we are already seeing massive cuts to supports in schools, including hundreds of educational assistant positions being eliminated. How are we supposed to build a better Ontario when so many children with ASD, developmental disabilities and learning disabilities are being abandoned by the province?'"

Speaker, we're seeing it across the province, where the boards are being forced by this government, because of a



lack of funding, to lay off the very staff who are skilled and professional and who can work with these children and actually support them. They're being laid off. There's no supports for the kids in the education system, and there's no plan to support them.

1700

Although the member from Sudbury can talk about how different ministries are working together, how the Minister of Children and Youth Services can stand up and say what a wonderful job the Minister of Education is doing and how well they're working together, clearly they're not working together. They are not communicating with the families; they're not communicating with the school boards who are trying their hardest to service these kids and help them reach their full potential. They're not helping.

There's a quote from Sam Hammond from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. "He told a rally of parents of autistic children"—hundreds of parents, thousands even, who came to Queen's Park recently over this—"that Premier Kathleen Wynne's cuts to intensive behavioural intervention or IBI therapy will put a system already lacking supports 'over the edge.'" I could not agree more.

These are the professionals, not the members on the government side. They're not professionals in this. The member from Sudbury mentioned, "You don't know unless you've lived it." They're not living it, and they are not listening to the experts. In fact, when Dr. Dawe comes forward and says what they're doing is not what was recommended, they throw him under the bus and say—

**Interjection:** "He's not our chair."

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** "He's not our chair."

Speaker, I have great concerns and families have great concerns about the fact that their children are now being thrown into the education system and being told that they are going to support them in there. Every one of the families in this room knows that that's not happening. This government is sacrificing these children. These ones you've kicked off the list—you've put an \$8,000 price tag on their heads. That seems to be all they're worth to you.

You need to change your minds and you need to support this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this motion today. I also want to thank the parents who are here today. I know what it's like to be a parent. I'm a parent of two children, one from the age of two and the other from nine months, so I understand that you want what's best for your child. So do I. They're adults now, and so do I.

I was also a school board trustee for 12 years. I spent 10 of those years on SEAC advocating for children such as yours. It's refreshing to see the opposition now advocating on behalf of children. I have been doing that for a very long time.

I want to start by reiterating—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:**—what it is we are debating today: an opposition motion that, if supported, would deny some children with autism their access to new and improved services and would create longer and unsustainable wait times. It would also keep children with ASD from getting the individual and customized care that we know they need.

I also want to dispel a rumour, Speaker, one that the Premier tried to dispel last week, and the minister on many occasions has commented on this. While the \$8,000 for those transitioning off the waiting list is a form of direct funding, some people are concerned that direct funding is off the table.

We know that this plan for autism established an implementation committee. This committee will include clinicians, experts and those with lived experience so that we hear what we need to hear and get all the input we can as we roll out the autism program and get children with ASD what they need. Whether that means direct funding or direct service, we will have to learn from those here today and the committee.

Speaker, on this side of the House, we know that autism does not end at five. I repeat that, Mr. Speaker: We know that autism does not end at five.

I could very well support the first statement in this motion, and our plan has made that clear. If a child with autism is above the age of five and is already receiving IBI, that will not stop. They will be assessed by a clinician as they move forward and will receive the intensity and therapy they need. That does not mean you will instantly lose the intensity of therapy that IBI provides. If they require that intensity and their clinician knows they require that intensity, that intensity will be available to them.

For those transitioning off the wait-list, ABA will be immediately available as they wait for the program to be rolled out, and their needs can be assessed. Our \$333-million investment of new dollars means that those ABA wait-lists, which on average can go beyond two years, will be shortened to six months by 2017.

It is unclear why the opposition feels that children with ASD should be required to wait two years for service, and since those wait-lists will grow if we do not act, future children who require therapy will have to wait even longer. That's unacceptable on this side of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's been absolutely heartbreaking to hear from Leeds-Grenville parents after this government snuffed out the hope for their sons and daughters to get IBI treatment. In question period this morning, I told the story of Aidan Timmins, a little boy who was on the IBI wait-list for 17 months. His grandmother Carol-Anne is in the crowd with us today. I know that she and her



husband, Tom, have been at many rallies with Aidan's parents, Sean and Sonia.

It was actually Sean who told me at a rally at the member for Kingston and the Islands's constituency office that he and Sonia found out on World Autism Awareness Day that Aidan was kicked off the IBI waiting list. How cruel that, on a day to recognize the need to do more for kids with autism, Sean and Sonia found out that this government is doing less.

Now, the minister can try to sell this as services for kids like Aidan being somewhat enhanced, but there's not a person in the gallery today who is being fooled by that statement. The \$8,000 offered to parents is an insult. It's a drop in the bucket when private IBI therapy costs \$100,000 for two years.

The minister also talks about offering enhanced applied behavioural analysis, or ABA, to children five years of age and over. Sean Timmins actually made some phone calls to service providers in my riding about how Aidan could access this new program. What he found out was shocking. Sean wrote: "The ABA providers in Leeds and Grenville have not even been told what this is. In fact, we were the ones who informed them of these changes when we brought them our letter."

There you have it: This government dangles some hope, but when parents actually follow up, they find out it's just another empty promise.

There are no extra supports for kids like Aidan. They've pulled the rug out from under them, and their parents are left to pick up the pieces: parents like Chelsea and Mathew Metcalfe. I know that Chelsea is watching at home. She wrote to me about her son Charlie. Chelsea and Mathew wrote to tell me how much IBI helped their eldest son, who was in the program from the time he was six to eight. Here's what they wrote: "The dramatic impact it had—and continues to have—on him, and our family, is simply outstanding. He responded very well to the one-on-one therapy, where he was taught the pre-learning, self-help and some social skills he needed to join a classroom with 20+ neurotypical children and minimal support"—so much for this government's insistence that IBI doesn't work for kids over five.

Chelsea and Mathew were thrilled earlier this year when Charlie finally got into IBI after waiting for two years. But just as Charlie began IBI, the government suddenly changed the rules. Because he's five, he was terminated from the program without even being properly discharged. Here's what they said: "This is an absolutely heartbreaking and unjust situation for our family to be facing," writes Chelsea.

"My son cannot be denied the therapy that he needs to improve his quality of life. His clinical supervisor so desperately wants him to continue, but all of her decision-making power has been taken from her by the ministry. Horrible." Well, Speaker, it is horrible.

1710

My message today to the backbench MPPs is that you've heard from your constituents. You've heard from them and you've heard from these people in the gallery

today. I want you to think about that when the vote comes. I want you to vote for our motion and vote for what's right.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I feel that it's so important to bring the voices of parents to this place. I'm going to be reading from an op-ed that was published in the Huffington Post yesterday by my friend and constituent, Professor Janet McLaughlin. It's entitled "Someone Tell the Ontario Liberals that Autism Doesn't End at 5."

She writes, "For the third time in a month, parents from across the province whose children's futures are at stake will descend on Queen's Park to watch the debate unfold."

First of all, I want to thank those parents. I want to thank you for your fierce advocacy and I want to let you know that we hear you.

She writes, "As one such parent, I've watched question period nearly every day for a month, witnessing members from both opposition parties passionately challenge the government to do the right thing. And repeatedly, the minister and Premier continue to insist that their decision to cut kids off of IBI at age five is based on the advice of their expert scientists, who apparently told them that kids over age four are no longer in the 'right developmental window' to benefit from the therapy...."

"Some of the government's actions directly contradict the experts' recommendations. The report states, for example, that kids should receive a minimum of 12 months of IBI, when the government's new program is cutting many off after just six."

"And while it's true that the government-appointed experts state that IBI is more effective before five, they do not indicate that children over four will not benefit from intensive therapy. In fact, plenty of evidence demonstrates the opposite, as do the thousands of children who have made significant gains in Ontario's pre-existing IBI program, in which (due largely to long waits for entry) 85% of participants were over the age of five."

"It is precisely because the Liberal government failed to invest sufficiently in the IBI program earlier that impacted families have been on wait-lists for two to four years while their children 'aged out' of coverage."

"They feel doubly betrayed. Desperate to obtain the treatment for their children that was promised to them, autism parents have added to their already busy lives by holding rallies across the province, signing petitions, writing letters, doing media interviews, tweeting ... under the hashtag #AutismDoesntEndAt5, and telling anyone who will listen that they have confidence in their children's potential to succeed, even if the government doesn't...."

"Why should everyone care? Supporting the most vulnerable members of our society should be a good enough reason, but it also makes economic sense. Intensive therapy is costly, but if provided, autistic children are more likely to gain independence and less likely to require expensive supports throughout their lives...."



"The Liberal government needs to admit it made a mistake and put this issue to rest....

"It's an investment that's long overdue. Let parents of autistic children get back to spending time playing with their kids rather than having to fight on their behalf."

Janet is here. She is Sebastian's mom. Sebastian's grandfather is here. They are never going to give up on Sebastian, and neither should we.

I am imploring this government to do the right thing for these children. Vote your conscience today. Support this opposition day motion.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Be seated, please.

Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I remember, when I first got elected in 2010, that one of the very first visits I had was from a group of parents whose children were struggling with autism. In the six years since, I've watched their children grow. My staff has worked carefully with them and they have worked closely through the autism association. They have advanced ideas on the work they've done in downtown Toronto and the work they did with SickKids hospital.

When I was research and innovation minister, we had massive funding for autism to understand the gene and understand this epidemic, this exponential growth, and how we could find ways to prevent it. It was heart-breaking, Mr. Speaker.

I remember sharing with them my experience as a child. As some of you know, because I've talked about him, my personal hero, Michael, struggled with AIDS and HIV as a preteen. I remember the federal health minister of the day, a Conservative health minister, saying that AIDS is a moral issue and not a health issue. I remember that morning at breakfast, my son and I realized there was no money coming from the federal government and there were no treatments for HIV.

Mr. Speaker, he struggled with fetal alcohol syndrome, which was no fault of his own, in his struggle to communicate. I had a support group of about a dozen parents. All of the other parents gave up after a year because there was no support, there was no cure.

All of us are human beings. I can remember the anger and the frustration as a parent with this brilliant, amazing young man, trying to live. Now he's doing well. We worked, but we had no help.

So I've always understood in the conversations I've had with the parents: Supporting their children with autism is a burden that no one can understand. I'm certainly not equating the situation with my child and the diseases that we struggled with, but I understand that sense of frustration and helplessness when doctors tell you there's no cure for it and there's no supports.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think the status quo is acceptable. I will never be part of a government that's not prepared to make big investments. This is as much money as my ministry spends in a year, and I care about the environment. A lot of those parents—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Some of the members want to yell over me, and that's the way they've been playing it today, but no one should be yelling over their parents. None of us have the right to tell parents what the right solution is.

Some of my parents are very excited about this opportunity. They see hope in this \$330 million; they see possibilities. We will be held to a standard to take this massive investment, as the member for Sudbury said, and help our children out.

Any of us who have been parents of kids who have struggled with insurmountable challenges can't help but empathize with these parents. But I believe that over the next year or two, as we make this massive investment in these children, we have to meet the expectations of their parents. That's our job.

I don't think anyone needs to tell us that autism doesn't stop at five. We well understand that, and so do the parents in Toronto Centre.

Whatever their views are, I respect them. I owe them my full commitment as a member of this House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** There's no doubt that the top call we continue to get in my riding of Niagara West—Glanbrook has to do with autism. There are stories about parents who are just trying to get a chance for their kids to have a higher quality of life, and God bless those who are here today. These stories are incredibly moving.

During autism awareness week, there was a girl in Alabama who did a speech to her classmates; I think she was nine years old or so. She talked about what autism actually meant to her to explain it to the other kids. She said that a person with autism has a brain that just works differently from other people's. It's not worse, it's just wired differently. She may react differently than other people, but her quality of life is just as important.

That's why it's so heartbreaking for so many of us. I know members on this side have their own stories in their ridings, too. Hopefully, we'll hear some from the other benches.

My daughter Miller is not autistic. She has had a severe speech impediment. When families tell me that they hope one day they'll hear their son or daughter say, "I love you," I get that. I've been there. We had early intervention, no doubt, but I know that the actual best progress happened after she turned five. She had greater maturity, stamina, and now I can have a conversation with her and it's wonderful. But I remember years ago thinking that might never happen. So I know what these families are going through. I know in my heart that if a child can continue to have IBI treatment after five, they're going to excel, not go backwards. I have no doubt that it's going to move them forward. They're actually going to respond better.

I know apraxia is different from autism, but I think that her brain is wired a bit differently—not better, not worse, just different. But I've seen it in our own lives and I want to see it happen for constituents of mine, to get



that same break, so that when the next Father's Day comes around, they'll hear their son or daughter say, "I love you. Happy Father's Day." I get it.

1720

Kelly and Chris Cimek of Pelham are in that boat. Their son Aaron was diagnosed with autism at the age of two. Sadly, because Niagara has among the highest wait-lists in the province, they've been waiting for four years. I met with them and they wanted me to raise this issue, which I did in correspondence to the government, saying, "Do something about Niagara's wait-lists." I know my colleague Mr. Bradley and colleagues Mr. Gates and Ms. Forster have similar concerns. Kelly said that she never imagined the solution to the long wait-list was to kick a whole bunch of kids off, including, probably, her son. They don't think Aaron will get service before he turns five years old. They want to know why—and have asked me to be their voice here in the chamber—the government's policy has made an arbitrary value judgment, to say that his hope is going to be gone.

Seven-year-old Wesley of Grimsby is similar. He had full-time IBI for the past 13 months, and his parents tell me that the change in his quality of life has been phenomenal. His parents say that they've gone from a son who tempered frequently and used diapers to a little boy who can talk. He is toileted and can enjoy activities. But there's one really important milestone left to go: chewing food and eating more than just three simple flavours of baby food at his age. The therapists are confident that with IBI therapy, they're going to reach that milestone. But he was kicked off and has a very restricted diet for the rest of his life. It's going to cause health problems, and I share his parents' fear that he's going to go backwards.

Beth Vanstaalduinen of Jordan Station waited nearly four and a half years for IBI service for her son, who just started IBI, finally, before his sixth birthday. Beth says, and God bless her heart, that the changes to autism are bittersweet because she's happy that other children are going to get services, but did it have to come at the expense of her son, who was going forward? It breaks her heart, because while he has a few months left, I guess, on treatment, every therapy session he has she knows the clock is ticking, and that's going to be it.

And little Dayton of Lincoln, who less than a year ago was banging his head on the wall and drinking from a baby bottle and was still in diapers—his mom, Jessica, works with him as much as possible. She's doing her best to try to mimic IBI therapy. She has made some progress. He has a bit of vocabulary now and he's toilet trained. But imagine, if he had ongoing treatment from a full IBI therapist, the kind of miracles that could happen.

We would never dream of cutting off access to the ER because you've waited for five hours or eight hours, and you go home. These are human beings. It should be the judgment of a health care professional when you're making progress, not based on the number of candles on your birthday cake. I hope members opposite will help out these kids in my riding and their own.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Like our leader, Andrea Horwath, I want to express my respect and admiration for the parents who are dealing with autism in their family, many of whom are here today. They've embraced their children, they have fiercely defended them, and it is clear that they are willing to go down the line to make sure that these children have a future and lives that they want to live, and that these parents will enjoy with them.

I also want to acknowledge the energy and the commitment of my colleague from Hamilton Mountain, Monique Taylor, who, like the parents, has been fierce in her defence of these children, with incredible energy and incredible commitment.

Speaker, I have to say that this decision by the government to effectively abandon children—to tell them that when they reach the age of five, they're no longer going to be getting the treatment they need and, frankly, in this society, deserve—may be one of the most callous things I've ever seen in government. I've been involved in politics for a long time, and I've seen a lot of bad stuff, but this is extraordinary to me.

Many good arguments have been made today, many good statements have been made, but I have to say that I think the parents are far more eloquent than anyone who's down here on the floor of this chamber. I want to read briefly in my remaining time from an email that was sent by a constituent of mine—Steven Sherwood, who is here today—to the Premier and copied to me back in April. It's a simple letter. It's not full of flourish. It's plain, it's direct, and I think it expresses what the parents, the families, are going through.

"Dear Premier Wynne,

"We are writing to you today to express dismay over the recent announced changes to funding directed toward helping children diagnosed with autism. Our lives are touched personally by this issue, as our beautiful four-year-old son Peter received a diagnosis of autism in July 2014 at the age of two years and three months.

"We immediately looked into having Peter assessed for the ... IBI program in Toronto, as we were learning how very expensive private therapy is in Canada for autism-related issues. He was assessed and ultimately found to be well qualified for the program, and immediately put onto the wait-list, which we were told was roughly two years long. We started to plan for his future based on this information.

"We are a middle-income family who live in Toronto with our four sons under the age of eight years old. We have struggled financially over the past two years as we have worked very hard to provide Peter with a variety of private therapies both in our home, as well as at more formal centres. A small minority of Peter's sessions were through publicly funded 'blocks' of ABA therapy which Peter was eligible to receive—the vast majority at significant cost paid for by our family....

"To now hear that our son may no longer receive this crucial treatment, after working so hard to prepare him



for IBI, often to the detriment of our own quality of life, happiness, and at times sanity, is beyond unfathomable. How could this government do something so cruel to families already promised hope and help for the future?....

“Ultimately, additional funding and awareness for autism is a wonderful thing, but an autistic child’s potential doesn’t end at age five, and the \$8,000 payout offered under the proposed program would cover only the equivalent of two months of IBI therapy vs. the years offered in the original funded program. Unfortunately, the way this new program has been rolled out to existing patients” and families “is nothing less than a train wreck.

“Sincerely,

“Steven Sherwood and Marguerite Schabas.”

I have nothing to add, Speaker—nothing.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Be seated, please.

Further debate.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I’m pleased to rise this afternoon to speak about this particular motion. My time is very short because I’m sharing with my other colleagues on this side of the House.

Let me begin by reminding everybody what the 2016 budget book said. On page 128, it talks specifically about dealing with special-needs strategies. Right there, it talks about special-needs strategies. On page 129, it then goes on to autism services.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I want to be dutifully respectful. I have listened attentively when opposition members speak, and I expect the same, Mr. Speaker.

Right in the section on page 128, it talks specifically about dealing with special-needs strategies. Right there, it talks about three parts. The three parts deal specifically with making sure that more supports and service delivery are seamless, dealing with rehabilitation, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. Then it talks about an additional \$17.8 million, about enhancing the transitional piece.

Then, on page 129 of the budget book, it talks specifically about dealing with the \$333 million. I hear the concern with respect to different stories from different constituents. I also spoke to some of the parents. I also spoke to teachers and principals in Toronto about this issue. Some of them have tweeted about me, and they have also asked for a meeting.

There is going to be a meeting. We will be meeting with you. I just want to say that the time for this meeting will be continued. But I do want to say that I acknowledge the concerns being heard, and we will be meeting.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say thank you for this opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I want the government to hear Val’s story. Her grandson is autistic. The family was actually going to come to Queen’s Park today but unfortunately

could not. They’re in a very fragile emotional state right now.

Val says it is difficult to talk about this. The family’s plans for their son have been turned upside down, and they’ve been left to scramble for alternatives at a time when there is such high demand and few resources.

1730

Everybody says early intervention is critical, but no one talks about how unaffordable it is for families. Val tells me the bill for her grandson’s IBI intervention, which is five times a week, two hours per day, will be \$3,000 per month, yet the government’s lifetime payout is \$8,000—about three months’ worth of service. Come September, the beginning of the school year, Val’s grandson, who has been waiting to receive IBI therapy for almost two years, will be cut off from support.

Regrettably, this is a complete U-turn by a Premier who promised to put vulnerable children first and to make “improvements in special education, particularly in the area of autism.”

Unfortunately, cutting access to IBI is not the end of this government’s cuts to vulnerable children. In my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound alone, they have cut almost \$2 million from special-needs programming, adding to the barriers that vulnerable children face. As a result, over 70 educational assistants who are working on the front lines with children with autism and learning disabilities are gone.

Just to make it clear: At a time when there’s never been a greater need for efforts to make autism a provincial priority, this government is kicking children over five out of life-changing IBI therapy and cutting their special education programming in schools.

This is yet again another complete U-turn, considering that just a few years ago, Kathleen Wynne made a personal commitment to provide vulnerable children the services they needed to succeed. At that time, the Premier said, “In order for children with autism to be able to achieve, they need to get into the schools, into the mainstream, as quickly as possible,” to “get the service they need when they need it”—to get the IBI therapy. In 2016, she is telling the same children and their families that they don’t need any of that.

Without access to IBI therapy, without access to the supports in the education system, what opportunities is this Liberal government providing for vulnerable children? What is the goal the members opposite are working towards?

We want to provide an opportunity for kids to move into the school system in as seamless a way as possible, and they can only do that with early intervention and access to IBI therapy.

It is unfortunate and regrettable to realize that after the good people of Ontario entrusted this government to be a force for good, the Liberals are rewarding that trust by cutting funding and supports for special-needs children.

Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong battle. Children with autism will become adults with autism—more than 100,000 Ontarians in this decade alone. What then, Mr.



Speaker? Children with autism require your support today, and your responsibility to deliver the needed supports is non-negotiable.

I support our party's call to reverse the programming cuts and champion equity for all children, and call on the Liberal government to provide all kids with IBI.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm glad to be able to stand today to speak to this motion.

Just a bit of background, Mr. Speaker: Two years ago, when I was elected to the riding of Newmarket–Aurora, some of the first people who came to see me were parents of children with autism. Over two years, we have continued to visit, sometimes as individuals, sometimes as groups. I've listened to the concerns they have about the future of their children and the service their children are receiving or, in some cases, not receiving.

I heard from a father of a young child; he was divorced, and the divorce very much had to do with the stress and strain that a severely autistic child brought to that relationship. This gentleman was having to live with his parents at the ripe old age of 42 or 43, so that all of his salary could go to providing the intensive therapy his child needed because he was on a waiting list. That child was on a waiting list.

I heard from other parents over the two years who came in to talk about their children and the need to get their children off a list, to get their children into intensive therapy. I can tell you this: As a father of three, it tears at your heart when any parent comes to talk to me about issues they're having with their child accessing service, no matter what that service is. It's beholden on government to make sure that children get the care they need.

This motion is fairly straightforward. Point number one, that the assembly accept that autism does not end at the age of five—that's a given. I don't hear anyone saying that autism ends at five. Autism is a lifelong issue. It doesn't end, as an earlier speaker said, at 18 or 20 or 50; it's a lifelong thing that you deal with. It doesn't end at five.

The second point, that intensive behavioural intervention is statistically effective: Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't have an argument with the fact that intensive therapy is oftentimes required and effective after the age of five; I'm not hearing that at all.

I do have a point, however, with the third bullet point that talks about restoring funding, because that infers that there have been cuts. Mr. Speaker, I have read this proposed legislation. I do not see cuts; I see a third of a billion dollars of extra funding—almost taking this funding to half a billion dollars. That is not a cut. That is not a cut.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** We've been hearing heart-wrenching stories from across the province today, stories of families who've had their hope of life-enhancing IBI therapy yanked away from them, stories from parents like

Beth Tackaberry of Brigadoon in Kitchener, who recently wrote me on Facebook. She said, "Our four-year-old son, Cameron, falls into the window of the cuts—because he turns five in July, he is no longer eligible for IBI treatments funded by the government."

She noticed signs that Cameron was not developing as his sister did when he was nearly two years old. "Cameron was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) just after his third birthday, in December 2014.

"After his diagnosis, we spent a long session at KidsAbility with therapists from the" ErinoakKids "treatment centre who determined Cameron needed IBI treatment.

"They advised that the wait would be 30-36 months before his first session. This was determined last April (2015).

"To have the rug pulled out from under us in April has gutted us. We are a middle-income family—I work full-time, my husband is now" staying at home "in order to focus on Cameron and his needs.

"The \$8,000 in transition funding will not go far. Our doctor has advised us that is about one week of IBI treatment.

"Cameron will be most vulnerable as he enters into the public school system. We are desperately afraid....

"I implore you to vote for the motion on Tuesday, May 17."

I would ask members on the other side of the aisle to listen to these stories closely, and I invite them to join us in that vote, not only for Beth, Cameron and his family, but for the parents and children who are here today from across the province.

Back in my riding of Kitchener–Conestoga, Cameron's story is just one of many I've heard in the recent weeks that have revealed the ongoing struggles faced by families of children with autism. I think of Craig and Amy Fee, who wrote in to the Premier on their son Kenner's overwhelming improvements thanks to the IBI therapy. Amy wrote,

"My experience with autism spectrum disorder began in February 2012.

"It was two full years after my three-and-a-half-year-old son had gone from a happy, chatty baby to an inconsolable toddler (who unless he was in a full-blown meltdown was completely mute) was diagnosed with autism.

"It shattered my world.

"My son's name is Kenner. He is now nearly eight years old. He completed IBI therapy last November.... His IBI did not start until he was more than five years old, yet he benefited greatly!

"Kenner is an amazing boy. He can write his name, draw a picture, work in a classroom, play with his peers, go out and be part of his community—and most importantly—communicate his needs, hopes and dreams. He most certainly would not be the child he is now without the IBI support that he received....

"Yanking this funding away just because a child hits age 5 is incredibly short-sighted and cruel to those who need the help....



"To put it into perspective, this decision directly impacts roughly 200,000 people in this province with autism....

"Do you really want this to be your legacy, Premier Wynne?

"Sincerely,

"Amy Fee."

Earlier today, I mentioned Laura Martin of Conestoga and her seven-year-old son Cole. I've got a picture of him here on my desk, as I look, with his dog and his sister. His grandparents are here in the galleries today. After three years of waiting, he finally started receiving IBI treatments in January before having the rug pulled out.

1740

I'll end by reading from one of my constituents who copied me on a letter to the Kitchener Centre MPP as the local rep for the Liberal government. Karen Iszczuk wrote on April 6 to "express my disappointment with the recent changes regarding the rules for the autism IBI funding.

"My son Trevor, who has been on the waiting list since he was two, is going to be impacted.

"I am asking that you please reconsider this new setup for children that have been waiting for this life-changing therapy for over one year, regardless of their age.

"With the new rules Trevor will only receive funding until he is five. As he is almost three and a half years old and still on the wait-list, this means he will not receive the support we were hoping for....

"We ask that you please reconsider these new rules.... We have been waiting for your assistance; please reward our patience with the system and don't cut us off."

I join with the parents and members in this room asking the government to not cut them off, and support restoration of funding for IBI for children over the age of five.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Be seated, please.

Further debate?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm pleased to stand and to welcome parents of children with autism who, since diagnosis, have been advocates for their children and who know that their children have unlocked magic and potential. They've been forced by this government now to become activists.

I have been meeting in my riding, as many of us have, with service providers, parents and children. I'd like to read something from Kim Moore, who's the clinical director of the Portia Learning Centre. They provide IBI and ABA therapy to over 75 children, ranging from Ottawa to the Durham region. These are their comments on behalf of families:

"Families are truly heartbroken over the decision to remove their child from the only therapy that will allow them to meet their full potential. Since the change in policy our office has been flooded with our parents calling in, in tears—wondering what they are going to do,

second-guessing their decisions to date. Some families have been sending their child for the minimal number of hours, believing that they were six months away from receiving provincially funded therapy.... Most families have remortgaged their homes, cashed in their life savings in hopes that their child will reach their full potential. These families are exhausted, both emotionally and financially. Parents are suffering from anxiety, depression; families are being torn apart. Their only government support now is the ABA program, which does not offer the number of hours needed to make any life-changing gains.... In my opinion ... all children should have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

"They have been waiting. Now they have no hope of continuing, the realization that their child's future has no hope of improvement is too much to bear." That was from a service provider.

I hosted a round table at my office and I had the pleasure of meeting six-year-old Jacob, three-and-a-half-year-old Autumn and four-year-old Mason, and of course their parents. I have a letter that I'd like to share with the minister on behalf of Tobi and Adam Riley, who are the parents of young Mason. Mom is here today.

"Dear Minister,

"At an early age, we noticed our son Mason was a bit 'different.' After waiting six months to see a doctor who specializes in ASD, Mason was put on the autism spectrum. This diagnosis was a traumatic time for our family. In retrospect, we were mourning the loss of certain expectations we had for our son. We immediately put Mason's name on an IBI and ABA wait-list. We were grateful for what all the doctors and medical professionals had told us about IBI. We had regained hope for Mason. We were ecstatic for this program to be offered. The knowledge of this program was a huge encouragement. All we had to do was wait our turn.

"We accept that early intervention and early diagnosis are beneficial. However, we don't accept that our son Mason was diagnosed with autism at 18 months, has been on a wait-list for three years, and will now be kicked off the IBI wait-list when he turns five in June. He is currently number 34 on the wait-list.

"We feel lied to and disappointed! We have waited our turn and we want what was promised to us. IBI is the only proven therapy to work. Putting our son into a 'mysterious' enhanced ABA therapy worries us ... especially considering our service providers can't even tell us what ABA entails.

"Unfortunately, we can't afford the recommended 20 hours per week private IBI. As a result, we have been borrowing money from our parents and the bank to help pay for 'part-time' IBI.... Not only have we failed Mason, but so has our government. This added financial stress is taking a toll....

"Being under five or over five shouldn't be any less deserving or entitled to this therapy....

"We beg you to reconsider these changes because autism doesn't end at five and neither should children's therapy."



Mr. Speaker, I would add that hope and potential shouldn't have to end at five, either.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Please be seated. Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. John Fraser:** I very much appreciate the opportunity to address this motion today. I recognize and acknowledge all the families who are here, and I appreciate the opportunity to be able to explain my position.

Over 20 years of being in my community and working in a member's office and being a member, I know that autism doesn't end at the age of five. I know that a developmental disability does not end at the age of five. I know that it does not end at the age of 15, when a family with a child with ASD is trying to get their child into a program in a school in my riding; or at 21, when they're transferring out of the school system into adult services; or at 55, when a parent is concerned about how their child is going to be cared for when they're gone. These are all things that we deal with as members.

I do know that putting 16,000 more children into therapy is going to help with those transitions. I know that. We know that more intensive treatment works. We know that it works at an early developmental age. We know that's where it works. We know that the program that we are going to is looking at tailoring the intensity to the needs of the child. So those two points, I think, we are in general agreement on. I cannot agree with the third point. There is more funding. There is \$333 million going into this, and 16,000 more children are going to be served—and families.

My commitment to my families in my riding, of those 2,200 who are affected, is to work with them to make sure that this transition, like every other transition that I have tried to help families with, will work for them. I know that members—not just on this side, but also on that side—are committed to doing that.

I do want to raise a couple of points. I want to respond in one way to what the leader of the official opposition said: No one is wishing anyone away. No one is wishing anyone away here. I think part of this debate, and one of the challenges with it, is the level of rhetoric and emotion that's in here and the impugning of motive on people on the other side.

We can disagree, and it's your role as the opposition to push us. I get that. I agree with that, and you should do that. We always need to push ourselves. But on all sides of this House—and that includes us—when we impugn motive on each other, like “You don't care” or “You've got it wrong” or “You didn't do that,” that's not right. That's been going on for too long in this debate, and it needs to stop. I'm saying that to this whole House, not just to this side or that side. I think that that's important—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Fraser:** I did not. I think what's important here is that we have a debate and that we recognize our role, but that we respect each other, and that's not what is happening. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to wrap this debate up today. We've heard a lot from the other side, the government side, saying that they get it, that they understand, that they accept that autism doesn't end at five. They tell us that they feel for these families and these parents. But it's time to put away the speaking notes and it's time to look inside, because if you can do what you're planning to do, you are relegating the children of these families to a life where they can never reach their full potential. We, as a society, have a responsibility to give the most vulnerable people an opportunity to do just that.

You need to ask yourselves if you are taking—you have conflicting science on your own side that really questions what you're doing with this funding. It questions what you're doing. This is not, I say to the member from Ottawa South, about impugning motives, but it is correct when we say what you're doing is wrong. What you're doing is wrong for these children and it is wrong for these families.

You have an opportunity here today. You brought out your policy. The people have spoken. The people are saying it is wrong. I was there for that demonstration that day, and I was moved by it. I was moved by it because I recognized that these families are facing the greatest struggle that they've faced in their lives or likely will face in their lives, and you are making it more difficult by taking their vulnerable children off a waiting list and cutting them off from the very treatment that would allow them to reach that potential that we all deserve.

Vote for this motion. It is the right thing to do.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Please be seated. Please be seated.

Mr. Brown has moved opposition day number 5. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

**Interjection:** Did you hear that properly?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Yes, I did hear it properly, thank you very much.

Call in the members. It will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1751 to 1801.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order. Please take your seats.

Mr. Brown has moved opposition day number 5. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Bisson, Gilles  
Brown, Patrick  
Campbell, Sarah

Gretzky, Lisa  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Hudak, Tim  
Jones, Sylvia

Natyshak, Taras  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Sattler, Peggy  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Todd  
Tabuns, Peter



Clark, Steve  
Coe, Lorne  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
French, Jennifer K.  
Gates, Wayne  
Gélinas, France

MacLeod, Lisa  
Mantha, Michael  
Martow, Gila  
McDonell, Jim  
McNaughton, Monte  
Miller, Norm  
Miller, Paul  
Munro, Julia

Taylor, Monique  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Vanthof, John  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakabuski, John  
Yurek, Jeff

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Baker, Yvan  
Ballard, Chris  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Chan, Michael  
Chiarelli, Bob  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
Dong, Han

Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fraser, John  
Hoggarth, Ann  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jaczek, Helena  
Kiwala, Sophie  
Lalonde, Marie-France  
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MacCharles, Tracy  
Malhi, Harinder  
Mangat, Amrit  
Martins, Cristina  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McGarry, Kathryn  
McMahon, Eleanor  
McMeekin, Ted

Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Oraziotti, David  
Potts, Arthur  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Sousa, Charles  
Thibeault, Glenn  
Vernile, Daiene  
Wong, Soo  
Zimmer, David

*Interruption.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 41; the nays are 50.

*Interruption.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please. Order.

*Interruption.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Enough. Order, please.

I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negated.*

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. McDonnell assumes ballot item number 56 and Mr. Pettapiece assumes ballot item number 64.

It being past 6 o'clock, this House now stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1806.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Simcoe–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Sophie Kiwala, Arthur Potts  
Todd Smith, Monique Taylor  
Glenn Thibeault  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yvan Baker  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Toby Barrett, Han Dong  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Peter Z. Milczyn  
Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lou Rinaldi  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Lisa Gretzky, Ann Hoggarth  
Harinder Malhi, Jim McDonell  
Eleanor McMahon, Lou Rinaldi  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Robert Bailey, Wayne Gates  
Monte Kwinter, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Cristina Martins  
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri  
Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Randy Hillier, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri  
Laurie Scott  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Steve Clark  
Granville Anderson, Robert Bailey  
Steve Clark, Vic Dhillon  
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Monte McNaughton  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Chris Ballard, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Bill Walker  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
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Assemblée législative  
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Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 18 May 2016

Mercredi 18 mai 2016

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 18 May 2016

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 18 mai 2016

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND LOW-CARBON ECONOMY ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 SUR L'ATTÉNUATION DU CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE ET UNE ÉCONOMIE SOBRE EN CARBONE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 16, 2016, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas / Projet de loi 172, Loi concernant les gaz à effet de serre.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Could I stand on a point of order?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** There's no quorum, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A quorum count, please.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. There will be a five-minute bell.

*The Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** A quorum is now present, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, it's great to be here this morning and have a quorum in the House and have this wonderful opportunity to talk about Bill 172. It's a very substantial bill, and this government needs to allow time for a full debate on this bill so we can express our concerns, and specifically, express our constituency concerns.

One thing that I've been hearing lately, which is kind of new to this debate, is that constituents are calling the office about this kind of random natural gas plan that was put out there. I see one member very nicely wondering about it himself. But people are concerned. There is now apparently a petition on Facebook—I just got that email this morning. They're asking, "What's happening with

natural gas. What's the plan?" And we're not sure, Speaker. All we know is that the Ministry of the Environment talked about natural gas, put it out there and apparently said something to the effect that they were going to eliminate natural gas.

Speaker, I would appreciate, if announcements like that are being made, that we get some background information about what they're doing, because we're left to reply—and my reply will be—that this was something I wasn't expecting, and that no one was expecting. This is something where we don't know if there is a plan, when it will be implemented, how it's going to affect Ontarians and how it's going to affect the affordability of energy that is delivered to Ontario and to people who pay energy bills.

It's kind of unfortunate that that announcement was made kind of off-the-cuff like that and got everybody concerned about the issue of natural gas. I'll tell you, Speaker, that I was in the riding last week and someone I know very well sent me that email and I forwarded it to the energy critic. Again, we're all kind of wondering what is going on with regard to natural gas and what's going on with the government on that side.

Saying that, Speaker, the environment and energy is an extremely important issue in Ontario. It's a file that needs to be addressed. It's long overdue. Back in 2008, this government was supposed to follow through with an action plan on pollution. It didn't happen, and finally, it's here.

I do have concerns, though, that this is maybe a bill that has been pushed and rushed through. I personally think this bill is a very big bill and needs to have more discussion. We've had since 2008 to bring this up, to go around Ontario to talk about it, to have input, to listen to opposition members and what amendments they would want to make. I don't think that what the process has become, as of today, has really allowed that to occur. It feels like we're being pushed, and it feels like we're being rushed. I hope this government will allow debate, and for each member to stand up and talk about this bill to represent their constituents' points of view.

Speaker, I can tell you that in my riding, people are concerned about the environment and concerned about energy and conservation. This is something that people really put as an important issue when it comes to the future of this planet and the future of this province. What we want to do, Speaker, is ensure that this would mean a system that has to be fair, effective and transparent. My understanding is that the commissioner of the environment—



**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The Environmental Commissioner?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Peter, correct me if I'm wrong: They won't have oversight over this bill, will they—this energy contract?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member can't have a conversation when she's up talking through me. You might want to get your information before or after. Thanks.

Continue.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. I just found my note on it, so I can answer my own question.

It says here that the act completely disregards the Environmental Commissioner. We want to know if the government forgot about the Environmental Commissioner when it comes to this act. The Environmental Commissioner should have access to the information and data she needs to properly assess the cap-and-trade system. That, I believe, is the point: The Environmental Commissioner doesn't have access to the information that was used in order to formulate this act.

That is problematic when we're talking about transparency and accountability, and when we're talking about making people buy into legislation and feel like they're part of that legislation and know that it is actually there to work for them and for the environment, for future generations to come. That is very concerning. I think we should all be worried that the Environmental Commissioner hasn't had access to information that this bill is composed of. It's problematic, Speaker.

0910

The other piece we are concerned about is the fund that has been set up. The government has recently announced \$325 million worth of programs that are being funded from cap-and-trade revenues. We believe that money should be invested in cap-and-trade so that people can make the adjustments into this new legislation. The problem is that there are no greenhouse gas reduction targets connected to these programs.

That's contradictory. You have funds that you have announced—\$325 million worth of programs to be funded from the cap-and-trade revenues—but on the other hand, they don't associate greenhouse gas reduction targets connected to these programs. Now, there is one part that's a very useful piece: The programs will be able to help co-op and non-profit housing. That's good to see. But to have a more comprehensive fund program, we need to know that there should be greenhouse gas programs attached to those funds, so that we can have measurable goals as to how that program will relate and roll out to how people are going to conserve and be conscious of taking measures to make sure that energy isn't wasted.

Speaker, that is a problem, and we think that it needs to be tightened up. I hope we're going to have the opportunity in the future. I don't think so.

**Interjection:** No.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I just heard a no, and that is very discouraging. Again, the transparency and over-

sight piece—why isn't that in there? Why isn't it connected—program funds to outcome to targets to results? Why hasn't the Environmental Commissioner been allowed to look at the documentation that was composed and gathered to formulate this bill? It's discouraging, Speaker, when those simple, standard, foundational operational components aren't part of a bill process so that people can feel that this is the best bill we can put forward. It almost feels like it's going to be constantly challenged over and over again. That's the problem with many of the bills that come to this House, Speaker.

The cap-and-trade revenues are in question. There's also a so-called Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account. It's not a separate special-purpose account at all. Again, it leaves it open to being used in many different ways. I think it should be targeted to the environment and to energy. When we're having a bill opening up a special fund, those funds should be dedicated to help improve energy costs, retrofitting and the environment. I think that's a simple kind of concept when you do that, Speaker. It actually makes people question why this government is opening up this kind of slush fund—nobody will know how it's being used. There won't be any kind of rules of the game when it comes to the money. But that's kind of what this government's *modus operandi* has been when it comes to using money in this Legislature. They don't have rules of the game; they just spend it, and later on they worry about deleting documents so people can't follow the money trail.

I appreciate the time debating this bill. I look forward to questions and comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to respond to the member from London-Fanshawe. I appreciate very much the support for the bill that exists over there, even given—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's nice if you look over here once in a while. I don't know: Your guy is up speaking and all the noise is coming from over there. It might nice if you—I'd like to hear what he has to say. Thank you.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The perfect is sometimes the enemy of the possible. We have to have good tension between those two to get it right.

I do want to let the member know that no, we are not eliminating natural gas. I repeat: We are not eliminating natural gas. We have a rural gas extension program that's going on right now, and I think—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Fraser:** Everybody's getting excited over there. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the erudite comments from the opposition, their thoughtful debate, especially the kind of debate that's going on right now.

The reality is that we have a collective responsibility to look towards the future 20, 30 years from now. Things



are going to look different; they're going to be different. We have to make them different.

Next week in my riding, with Ecology Ottawa, who are very supportive of the bill and the legislation that we've put forward, we'll be holding a town hall. I know they held a similar one in Ottawa Centre. They had about 250 people there, which, I think, at any town hall is a good number, and it shows how important it is to the people that we represent.

I take to heart what the member has to say, and her advice. I would like to remind her again about that tension between the perfect and the possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** It's always a privilege to rise in the House. I'm somewhat surprised now that it seems to be that the government is trying to do some damage control here and trying to convince us that now they aren't going to get rid of gas. They very much changed the name of the minister to be the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. He talks about getting rid of gas. He talks about getting rid of nuclear.

You really wonder: Is there a plan in this government? Where are you going? We talk about the need for a collective plan. In my mind, a collective plan would be something more than three jurisdictions in a continent of hundreds. I mean, let's be serious here. We're trying to talk about buying credits from California that are going to cost us hundreds of millions of dollars over the next number of years, and yet where is this money coming from? It's coming from our economy. It's very nice that we send this cheque to California, but how is that helping our businesses? If we get off natural gas, we're talking about another \$3,000 a year per household—a huge cost.

This is a government that promised, just a short two years ago, that this would not be an issue in this term. I guess that should have been the first clue from this government that they were actually going to pull it ahead, because when they make a commitment, it seems it always changes, whether it be the HST or raising taxes.

Here we are with what many people are calling a very radical plan. Really, when you look at the reason for it, they're out of money. We see them yesterday, very much on board to cut off services to autism, a group of people very much in need where, actually, we could make a difference. Funds are cut off.

This is a government without money. So we're nervous about this extra money in their bank account, because we know one thing for sure: It will disappear.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak this morning. My colleague from London—Fanshawe has expressed some of her concerns—real concerns, I think—about the bill before us.

Speaker, there's no question that as the world heats up, our way of life is going to be disrupted. Our standard of living is going to drop. There is risk that tens of millions of people will be driven away from their homes

and will become refugees. We've already seen the impact on the stability, political and otherwise, of Europe, with a comparatively small flow of refugees from Syria and North Africa. We are not facing very many pleasant prospects in the decades to come. Action on climate change is needed.

The bill before us is useful, but it has some substantial problems that I hope will be addressed by this government. We tried to address them with amendments. As it is structured now, it doesn't provide support for low- and middle-income rural and northern residents, who in fact are going to have a tougher time dealing with the changes that this society is going to go through. This bill is going to need tremendous political support, and to the extent that those who are most disadvantaged aren't given extra support, the ability of this bill and climate action to garner political support is going to be reduced.

0920

The problems with transparency were ones that we tried to correct in amendments during clause-by-clause. Unfortunately, Speaker, those have not been corrected. Again, the legitimacy of climate action is going to depend on people's feeling broadly that what is before them is understandable, clear and directed at the concerns they have and that society has as a whole.

Speaker, we do need action on climate change. We also need this government to address the political problems that will arise if this bill is not administered in a way that is fair, transparent and effective.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise this morning in support of Bill 172. I hear the concerns raised by my colleagues opposite from Toronto—Danforth as well as from London—Fanshawe, because they do believe and support the fact that there is climate change concern across Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the bill has been clearly stated in the preamble. More importantly, it talks specifically about the issue of carbon and how it has been affecting climate change and global warming. We need to take action now, and not wait until the next generation, because we know very clearly that climate change is affecting every household and every community: agriculture, infrastructure, natural areas and ecosystems. But more important are our Great Lakes. All three parties need to do everything to support and protect the Great Lakes for future generations.

I was very pleased and listened attentively to the member from Toronto—Danforth talk about why we need to do something now, and not wait, as those members from the opposition say we need to do this and that. At the end of the day, the government is required to protect the citizens. This bill, if passed, would ensure some protection in terms of climate.

More importantly, this bill also helps our First Peoples, because their culture and their spirituality are reflected in the land, the water and the animals. The indigenous population and the Métis community depend on the land.



With this proposed bill, if passed, we are going to be working with our indigenous population and making sure that we respect their traditional ecological knowledge and systems. We as a government need to do everything we can to protect them as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from London—Fanshawe, two minutes.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I would like to thank the members from Ottawa South, Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, Toronto—Danforth and Scarborough—Agin-court.

Yes, I think the majority of Ontarians and the majority of the global population agree that climate change is at our doorstep and that something needs to be done. My disappointment comes that when we were looking at this issue back in 2008, I would have appreciated that this issue had been an education piece since 2008 for legislatures at large, for the public and for stakeholders, so that we didn't feel like this was being pushed through so quickly.

It is imminent that we meet climate change; there's no argument. But we also need assurances that the cap-and-trade revenues will be dedicated to climate change action, and the Financial Accountability Officer isn't so sure that is going to happen.

We talked about affordability. I'm the seniors critic. I'm the citizenship and immigration critic as well. Those two areas that are part of my portfolio are very concerning. As the member from Toronto—Danforth mentioned, people coming from other countries into Ontario need to have that affordability piece till they get on their feet. Seniors, of course, are struggling every day.

Other places are already doing things to help affordability. The British Columbia tax credit helps people recoup the losses from increased energy costs from the price of emissions. Alberta is rolling out a credit in 2017. Already in California, the law requires that 25% of cap-and-trade revenue is to be put back into communities that need help.

Those are some of the things other jurisdictions are doing to help this move along in a smooth process. It's kind of disappointing sometimes that those things aren't taken into consideration when legislation is passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Bill 172 is a bill that has a very, very daunting goal and task before it. It's a bill that tries to deal with a problem that the whole world is trying to deal with. Wherever you go in the world, they are in some way trying to deal with this challenge of the changing temperatures in the world, the erratic climate patterns, the unpredictability of climate and the threat of global warming. There is no jurisdiction in the world that has found a perfect solution to these challenges, whether you go to the United States or Europe or Asia. It is not easy.

Look at the challenges China is having, with its population of over 1.3 billion people, trying to deal with their climate challenges as they try to keep growing, as they keep building their industrial capacity. So you can imagine.

We think we have a challenge here in Canada, with our clean water and vast forest system, but you can imagine the challenges that they have in India, dealing with the challenges of climate change.

By no means is this bill a perfect bill, but certainly a lot of work went into it. I know there were many, many opinions offered about how to improve the bill. There were some improvements in committee. By no means is this the end, nor is it the perfect solution, but at least it is a bold and very, very energetic attempt, you might say, to try and deal with this daunting problem of climate change.

There are a lot of people still who do deny the fact that there is a challenge here. I can understand why some people may deny. It is hard to understand, because you don't see it in front of you. But certainly, scientists internationally feel there is a real threat, so we have to listen to them.

Some people will castigate the deniers, but I think they have, in some cause, reason to raise questions about this threat to the world's sustainability. But I think we have to take the science seriously in this case. We don't have any other choice, because if we don't take it seriously, the consequences are irreversible.

One thing we should look at is that there are changes that can be made and that give us hope. At one time in Ontario, we had all these dirty coal-burning power plants. I know when we had the debate in this House years ago about whether you could even close the plants, they said, "You're crazy. You could never close the coal-burning plants. The energy of this province will come to a standstill, because we depend on coal. You can't replace it."

All the coal-burning plants are closed. Somehow, we've survived that. It's still working, our energy supply. We've replaced those plants. One of the real outcomes of that is that we don't have any smog days coming from Hamilton and, later, Ontario. We know how we used to face that air-quality issue every summer. It was frightening for a lot of parents to see what was in our air in Hamilton and Toronto. A lot of it was also coming from the States. But now, those smog days have been almost eliminated, and that is the result of government action. So it can be done, but it's never going to be the total solution, that's for sure.

I think of the changes we can make to the quality of our water. I remember Lake Ontario. You would never go salmon fishing in Lake Ontario. I remember there were the smelts in Lake Ontario, perhaps, and there were lampreys. But now we have edible salmon, 25-, 30-pound salmon, in Lake Ontario. They've come back. Our own river here in the west end of Toronto, the Humber River, was basically a swamp. It was filled with garbage. About all that was in the Humber River were carp. Carp were the only things in the Humber River. But we had a sustained effort by local government and by provincial government to clean up the Humber River. Now the Humber River has salmon in it every year that are spawning, that are healthy, that are going upriver to spawn every September. Right in the middle of Toronto, we have healthy

salmon. They're Pacific salmon, but now we're introducing Atlantic salmon—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew might want to sit in his own seat.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** It's too bad that some members don't appreciate the work that has been done in cleaning up our rivers and lakes, and our air. But it is something that we've done, not government by itself but with the co-operation of all the local groups and all the advocates and the population of these cities in Ontario. We've done some good work.

We in no way think that this bill or past bills are going to solve all the problems dealing with environmental sustainability, but we owe it to the citizens of Ontario to try. This is a very valiant effort to try and do something about climate change. We've got to all ensure that everyone is engaged in it, because the battle cannot be won by government alone. We have to have the co-operation of everyone.

I think that one good thing is that industry and commerce understands that there are a lot of jobs in cleaning up the environment, a lot of good, high-paying jobs in this whole area of promoting environmental sustainability and cleaner air and water and, hopefully, lowering the threat to our climate.

Again, there are many difficult things to be done. This bill asks for many difficult things to be done. But it also promotes a lot of good, positive actions. I just think that the work before us is daunting, as I said. There's a heck of a lot to do. We've got many, many very challenging days, months and years of work ahead of us. We've just got to get at this work as soon as we can.

Mr. Speaker, we've had nearly 10 hours of debate at third reading. This is an unprecedented amount of debate on a bill before the House. I know when the Conservatives were power, no third reading debate was even allowed in this House for about nine years. So I think it's about time that we get to the work ahead of us and start really working on improving our chances of mitigating climate change. As a result, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I would just like to acknowledge the fact that I haven't spoken to this bill yet, and there are a lot of people in Prince Edward-Hastings—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That's not a point of order. Thank you.

*Continue.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I know, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservatives don't want to get on with the work. But I think there are enough of us here to understand that we've got to work at this as soon as possible. Mr. Speaker, as a result I move that this question be now put.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Gengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Speaker, there's much more debate that needs to be done on this—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. That's not a point of order. Have a seat. Thank you very much.

Mr. Colle has moved that the question be now put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow the question to be put to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

This will be dealt with after question period.

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** No further business.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 1030.

*The House recessed from 0934 to 1030.*

## SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before I move to introduction of guests, I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table a special report of the Auditor General of Ontario on government payments to education sector unions.

## REPORT, FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I also beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table a report from the Financial Accountability Officer entitled Economic and Fiscal Outlook: Assessing Ontario's Medium-Term Prospects.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to introduce the father of page Leah Walsh. Damien Walsh is in the House, along with Leah's brother, Riley. Welcome, Damien and Riley, to the House.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** It is my privilege to introduce the mother of our page captain, Samuel Simeon Suresh, standing next to me. His mother is Dorothy Thiagarajan, and she will be in the public gallery this morning.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It is with great pleasure that I have school kids visiting Queen's Park today from Manitoulin Island, from Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik, from Sagamok.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** On behalf of my colleague from Hamilton Mountain, I'd like to introduce one of our



pages, Laura Persichini—and I hope I pronounce this correctly. Her mother, Mary Persichini; her brother Alex Persichini; and her cousin John Jackubowicz are in the public gallery this morning. I hope I did justice to the pronunciation. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Hon. David Oraziatti:** I'm pleased to introduce Shelby Dockendorff and Shaan Sharma, who are in the members' gallery and are interns in our ministry. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

A point of order: the member from Trinity–Spadina.

**Mr. Han Dong:** Thank you, Speaker. I seek unanimous consent of this House to allow me to place this hat on my desk in support of the “other” NBA east conference finalists, our beloved Toronto Raptors.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Trinity–Spadina is seeking permission to leave his hat on his desk. Do we agree? Agreed.

Further introductions?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I'm absolutely delighted that our page captain today, Spencer Couch, is joined by his mother, Shannon Williamson. She will be in the public gallery this morning. Welcome. You have a great son.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like to welcome, from the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction, Walter Koppehaar, John Rogers, Chris Adach, Jacob Kachuba, Erwin Terwoord, Paul Seibel, Zoran Radonjic, Scott Pope, Scott Harris, Paul Power, Imre Kenedi, Dan Tadic, Tanya Brown, Tony Defina, Paul Mikolich, Anthony Ober, Adam Hurst, Charlie Jenks, Edward Whalen, Katie Keenie and Jas Singh. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm pleased to welcome one of our pages, Laura. Her mom and her brother are here today, Mary and Alex Persichini, and her cousin John Jackubowicz. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have with us today in the Speaker's gallery a student delegation from the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies from Richmond, Virginia. They are the future political leaders of the United States, so let's treat them the way we want them to be treated. Welcome to our guests.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please, let's not heckle the visitors. Thank you.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Despite the fact that natural gas accounts for 76% of heating in Ontario, we learned that the Liberals' climate change plan will apparently phase out the use of

natural gas. Converting a home from the natural gas to electricity would cost about \$4,500. That's in addition to the \$3,000 a year more that it will cost to use electricity over natural gas.

An article in the Financial Post said, “The ban on natural gas means Ontarians will either soon end up a lot colder or a lot poorer.”

To the Acting Premier: Which is it? Is this government making families and seniors a lot colder or impoverished?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Once again, the opposition never fails to disappoint when it comes to actually inventing our policies. In fact, despite what the opposition says, we are not forcing anyone off natural gas. What we are doing is looking for ways to help homeowners save money and reduce—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** In fact, we've announced \$230 million to expand natural gas for northern and rural communities, and we've announced \$100 million to help owners who use natural gas, oil and propane to upgrade their homes, reduce their energy bills and cut pollution.

This leader claims that he cares about the planet. I don't think he does.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** It appears like the Acting Premier hasn't seen the work and the pledges of the Minister of the Environment or the Premier on their climate change plan.

Since the Liberals took power, Ontario hydro rates have gone up 325%—unbelievable. That's three times the cost of any other good or service. Naturally, the Liberal solution to this problem is to force 76% of families and businesses that use more affordable natural gas to convert to electric heating. That's going to cost the average family \$4,500 to make the switch and \$3,000 a year to heat their homes thereafter. That's every single year.

How does the Liberal Party, how does this government believe families can afford to pay another \$3,000 a year? It's ridiculous.

1040

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I can stand for an hour.

Minister?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We are not banning natural gas. As a matter of fact, you'll continue to see more natural-gas-efficient heating/cooling systems that the Deputy Premier just outlined.

It's interesting, the lack of understanding—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You specifically said in this House that you shouldn't be heating your home with natural gas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just in case he didn't hear—and he's now doing it again—the member from Renfrew, come to order.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Oh, I thought it was general.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That will get you another one, if it continues.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We will be expanding natural gases in areas like trucking as well, where it's a lower-carbon fuel relative to that.

But one of the other things that we'll be doing—in the Leader of the Opposition's own constituency, there is a company called Royalpark Homes, who are building net-zero buildings that cost almost nothing.

This talk about increased cost is absolutely nonsense. As a matter of fact, they have—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Back to the Acting Premier: It's bad enough that the Acting Premier hasn't read the government's climate change plan, but it appears like the Minister of the Environment has forgotten about his own speeches and hasn't read his own plan, because the government's plan to phase out natural gas is foolish.

This government has spent billions building and moving natural gas power plants. They've spent millions expanding natural gas to rural municipalities and have promised to spend millions more. The Liberals want bus fleets to switch to natural gas, and then they come up with a plan to take natural gas out of homes. As the Minister of Energy would say, the Liberals are all over the map.

Mr. Speaker, why are they taking the choice away from households? Why won't houses be able to heat with natural gas, when this Liberal government has spent years investing millions and millions into the natural gas infrastructure?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Start the clock.

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I would like to invite the Leader of the Opposition, and maybe he can join me and the member for Barrie and we will take him to Royalpark Homes. We'll go to London and we'll introduce him to Sifton homes. Right here in Toronto, we can go out to Mimico on the GO, and you can see what the other technologies are that we're going to help incent that lower—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're getting close to warnings, and I'll convert to warnings. If I sit down and I hear a peep, we're going to warnings.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The member doesn't seem to be aware that in his own constituency and in his neighbours' constituency, we have some of the leading low-carbon—some of them are cogen. There is a whole range of technologies, as there are in the auto sector.

We're not taking natural gas heating away from anyone. When people come to replace their old systems, they'll be able to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## GOVERNMENT DEFICITS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. This morning, the Financial Accountability Officer confirmed what we here have been saying for months: This government is using one-time money from the sale of assets, contingency funds and tax increases to try to balance their budget. Yet the FAO says they'll still come up short in 2017-18, and he forecasts a \$600-million deficit. He says this will grow as large as \$3.5 billion by 2020 if economic growth changes even slightly.

When asked about whether this government is properly balancing the risks, the FAO said, "We don't believe this fiscal plan does."

Speaker, will the minister finally admit there's a structural deficit in Ontario?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I'd like to begin by thanking the Financial Accountability Officer for his report. We collaborated with the Financial Accountability Officer. His forecast and recommendations and the risks that he highlights are appropriate and we're mindful of them. It's why we take the actions and the prudent measures that we've achieved. He says that the government has the ability and is able to balance its deficit, and the government is doing just that in 2017-18 and the year after that.

On this side of the House, we're committed to balancing the books and ensuring that we grow the economy and create more jobs. He goes on to say Ontario's economy will "outperform the rest of Canada in 2016." He says, "Over the next several years, most economic forecasters, including the FAO, expect the Ontario economy will grow at a solid pace, supported by gains in international exports and business investments."

We're taking the necessary actions. We are growing the economy. We're balancing the budget next year and the year after that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Back to the minister: I'm surprised he suggested they collaborated. The FAO says they were blocked with "cabinet confidentiality" at every turn. The FAO was clear that this fiscal plan is not evenly balanced and most risk is on the "downside." He also said he has "serial disappointment" in the government's projections. Their forecasts have missed the targets in each of the past five years.

That means that without selling assets, they won't meet revenue targets. After 2018-19, the FAO projects a



deterioration in the province's budget balance with a deficit of \$1.7 billion by 2020. That's in his report. He also forecasted net debt will continue to skyrocket with \$54 billion added. My question is, will the minister admit the government waste, scandal and mismanagement is hurting Ontario?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** In addition to the FAO, who used outside, external support to establish his forecast, I also note that the credibility of the 2016 budget is on fiscal plan. In fact, Moody's recently upgraded Ontario's credit rating outlook based on our government's economic and fiscal plan, and the Conference Board of Canada indicated that a balanced budget in 2017-18 is in reach.

Furthermore, the very proposals being put forward by the FAO are appropriate in terms of providing some sensitivity around those potential risks, which we as a government have always been addressing. It is why, for the seventh year in a row, we're outperforming, achieving better results than previously anticipated, even with low revenues. The appropriate prudence that the member opposite talks about in regard to contingencies is appropriate and the FAO made that very clear today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Back to the minister: Yes, the FAO confirmed again that they'll only balance by selling assets. He also reported that the government is on track to continue starving our health care system while we're seeing nurses fired regularly. The FAO says cost factors mean they should be increasing health care spending by a 5.2% average per year, yet they're capping it at 1.8%. He told us that that is not realistic.

This government was told how their waste, mismanagement and scandal would crowd out critical spending, and now the FAO this morning confirmed that indeed has happened. Just how many more nurses will this government have to fire? How many more hospital rooms will this government have to close to balance their budget?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The member opposite has just reinforced the very nature of the transformations that are necessary to be included in our plan without sacrificing those very essential services in health care and education. It is why we are increasing health care by an additional \$1 billion. It is why we are supporting more education, including free tuition for our most vulnerable students. It's why we're investing \$12 billion more in capital for creating new hospitals, and it is why the FAO has stated that those are prudent measures, measures that are offsetting and mitigating the risks.

The FAO highlights the fact that prudence is included in our budget. The member opposite knows that fully well, and if he doesn't that's because he doesn't understand.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. The Liberal government has spent the last week insisting that overcrowded hospitals aren't a problem,

and apparently that's why Liberals think they don't need any standards with respect to occupancy. Even though Liberals won't admit it, their own numbers prove that hospitals across Ontario are stretched beyond their limits. It's not just acute beds that are being affected; it's mental health beds as well.

1050

Will the Deputy Premier admit that Liberal cuts mean that mental health beds across Ontario are filled to over 100% capacity, month after month, year after year, across this province?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I do want to make it clear that we are very much aware of the challenges our hospitals are facing. The difference, though, between the position of the NDP and the position of the government is that the solution in their case, they argue, is building more hospital beds. Our solution is to build more beds where they are necessary, but wherever possible, when people are ready to leave the hospital, provide the supports for them outside the hospital, in the community or in their home. That is the focus of the transformation that is under way in our health care system across the province. It's what patients want. It's what's right for the health care system. I do not understand why the third party is fixated on a model of care that does not meet the needs of patients.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, far too many families in this province know how hard it is, how difficult it is, to get mental health support services when you really need them. And now the government's own record proves that mental health beds are stretched beyond their limit across this province. London Health Sciences has been running at over 100% capacity for more than two and a half years, Thunder Bay Regional has spent the last two years filled beyond capacity and Sault Area Hospital has also most recently reached more than 107% capacity. How can the Acting Premier defend even more Liberal cuts when mental health beds are stretched to such capacity, are over capacity, and are so massively overcrowded across the province?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, once again I have to clarify that there are no cuts to health care. In fact, we are increasing spending by \$1 billion in the budget that we passed, that they voted against.

Mental health care is a significant part of the increase in health care spending because we are all very acutely aware of the importance of investing in appropriate mental health services, Speaker. We have actually put our money where our mouth is. We know that one in five Ontarians is going to experience a mental health illness, and we have a strong record of investing in mental health services and addictions.

Since 2003, the funding has gone up by half a billion dollars, and every year we're spending \$3 billion on mental health and addiction services.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It isn't just London, Thunder Bay or Sault Ste. Marie that are facing this mental health



crisis. Mental health beds in Ottawa, St. Catharines and Burlington are all filled beyond capacity, Mr. Speaker. Hospitals in Kitchener, Oshawa, Whitby and North Bay have also reached their limits. When hospitals are overcrowded, it takes even longer for folks who need mental health supports to get the care that they so desperately need, Mr. Speaker. That's what happens when you freeze hospital budgets, when you lay off front-line care providers and when you close beds in hospitals. When will this government stop cutting hospital services?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, once again, it's not just about hospitals. They are a very important part of our health care system, but when people are ready to leave hospitals, there has to be a place for them to go that is safe and that will keep them well, which is why we're focusing on increasing the number of supportive housing units. We have committed to building a thousand more supportive housing units, 248 of them in this year alone.

So we are focusing on getting people the care they need in the right place. That is what our position on health care is: Understand the needs of patients, build the capacity where the need is the greatest, and don't keep people in hospital longer than they need to be in hospital.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is again to the Deputy Premier. The Premier has tweeted, "We can't ignore mental health." But the trouble is, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what this Premier and this government are doing. Liberal cuts mean that mental health beds across Ontario are overcrowded. This Liberal government just keeps on cutting services, laying off workers, and making it harder for families to access the mental health supports that they need. It begs the question, why does this government have no standards or policy with respect to overcrowding so that patients who need mental health services can actually access those mental health services?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, we have listened over and over and over again to allegations that we are cutting health care. That is patently false. I urge the third party to really think long and hard about whether they want to stand up day after day and make a statement that simply is not true. We are investing more in health care. We are investing more. Mental health is a priority area for our new investments in health care.

I think the people of this province actually expect people from all sides of this House to base their arguments on the facts. When they talk about cuts, they are simply not reflecting the accurate situation in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, fixing mental health services means funding hospitals properly. It means ensuring that when someone needs care, they can actually access the care. That should be a policy the government should implement.

The crisis of overcrowding in hospitals won't be fixed by a handful of feel-good tweets or Liberal talking

points. It certainly won't be fixed with another year of cuts to hospital services in this province and cuts to front-line health care workers. Will the Deputy Premier look at the government's own numbers and realize and admit there is a crisis in Ontario's mental health services and stop cutting hospital services in the province?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We on this side of the House have really focused on improving the system of mental health care. I think all of us would agree that the system that we inherited was a pretty disjointed system that did not serve the people of this province very well. That's why we created a comprehensive addictions and mental health strategy: to support Ontarians from childhood into old age with the right supports at the right time and in the right place, Speaker. The first phase of the plan is to increase funding to our mental health and addiction agencies by \$220 million over three years. That is not a cut; that's \$220 million more.

The first three years of the strategy focused on children, and I'm very happy to report that an additional 50,000 children have received supports—addiction and mental health services—as a result of our increased investments in mental health.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** There is a silent crisis in health care in this province. Patients know it, families know it, and New Democrats are determined to fix it. Liberal cuts have overcrowded our mental health beds in this province and the Liberal government literally has no plan to deal with it. Instead, their plan is to implement more cuts, to lay off more front-line care providers and to close more beds.

People deserve mental health services when and where they need them. Ontarians deserve a government that shares this priority. When will the government stop ignoring the facts, stop ignoring the overcrowding in mental health hospital beds across this province and stop the cuts to Ontario hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I don't know how many times I have to say it. Maybe we should send a copy of the budget over so that the third party actually understands that we're increasing investments in our health care system—in stark contrast, I might say, to the 300 mental health beds that they closed when they were in office.

What I can tell you is that our investments in community mental health are making a difference. We see that in our communities, and I urge members from all parties to actually understand what's happening in their communities to improve access to services for mental health challenges and addictions.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Earlier this morning, the Auditor General confirmed that the Liberal government paid over \$90 million in secret payouts to education stakeholders above and



beyond contract negotiation transfer payments, even the \$600,000 at the Sheraton hotel, and \$22 million of that was undocumented. The Liberals took this money intended for students out of classrooms.

I want to quote from the Auditor General: "We found very little evidence of governments paying education sector unions for significant bargaining costs elsewhere in Canada. Accordingly, Ontario is an outlier with respect to this use of taxpayer funds."

Mr. Speaker, this practice only stopped when the government got caught. They have admitted that this was wrong and that the money came from kids in classrooms. How does the Minister of Education justify taking \$90 million out of the classrooms that was intended for students?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Education.

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**Hon. Liz Sandals:** First of all, I absolutely reject the issue that it was taken out of classrooms. It was not taken out of classroom money. It was taken out of what's called Education Program—Other, which is used for funding professional development, so it was not taken out of classrooms. That is just a totally incorrect interpretation.

What I will say is that we have a long-standing practice in Ontario of working with all our partners. We actually believe that when it comes to professional development, it's most effective if everybody is part of it. We fund school boards for professional development. We fund the directors' organization. We fund teacher organizations. We fund subject organizations, faculties of education and, yes, teachers' unions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Perhaps the minister would like to read the report, as I did, and she would understand that her interpretation of the auditor's report is wrong. It came directly from the elementary and secondary school education development fund, meaning it came from grants for needs of students. That's exactly where that came from.

Liberals are now closing provincial and demonstration schools. They're kicking kids off the autism wait-list, as we saw yesterday. They're closing rural schools—and urban schools, because my daughter's school might be on the chopping block. Thirty-eight school boards had to cut their student special education funding to the tune of—guess what?—\$22 million. Parents are forced to fund-raise in Windsor for basic needs, including school repairs.

So I'll go back to generously ask the education minister for a second chance at responding to me: Why is this government forcing kids to sit in portables with their jackets on all winter, at the same time as they are spending \$90 million, almost undocumented—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order. Start the clock.

A reminder for everyone: You speak to the Chair. Minister?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you. Of course, the money did not come from the Grant for Student Needs. The Grant for Student Needs is a regulation which very clearly lays out the calculation for money to go to school boards, and we follow that regulation always.

But let me tell you, Speaker, what the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the OECD, had to say about professional development in Ontario. It said, "The Ontario experience suggests instead that by treating teachers as professionals, and including them at the table, they were able"—Ontario was able—"to build considerable goodwill—a critical resource for long-term and sustainable"—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The Ontario "government was able to direct that energy towards win-win issues like providing more professional development time. Ultimately, the Ontario government created a sustainable"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Yesterday, member after member from the opposition benches got up and told heartbreaking stories of the impact of this government's plan to kick children over the age of five out of IBI therapy. Parents sat in the chamber sobbing while Liberal members sat with their BlackBerry's, smiling, turning their backs to debate, and laughing with their colleagues.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Put your question, please.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This government continues to be truly disrespectful to the parents of this province. You can't claim to care deeply about the stories parents are telling you if you don't even have the respect to listen to them.

How many parents have to leave this Legislature in tears before this government starts to listen?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Well, Speaker, where to start with this? First of all, I admire and respect all the members who were here in the Legislature yesterday when the families and groups were here, whether that was question period or whether it was the three hours in the afternoon for the opposition debate. I think all members paid attention and listened to the debate with interest. We're very mindful of the families who were here.

I worry about this critic talking in a way that's not factual, saying that we're taking kids out of therapy. We're not. We're not.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. You have a one-sentence wrap-up.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you. I ask all members of the House to stick to the facts. I ask them not to use language like “kicking kids out of therapy.” That is not what we’re doing, Speaker. We’re investing in kids. We’re creating a better—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Before I start the clock, I would make a comment to the members of this chamber. If at any time this assembly decides that they have a lack of confidence in the Chair, then put a motion forward and have a non-confidence vote in the Chair.

Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Speaker, yesterday in debate, the minister tried to make it seem like these changes wouldn’t have devastating impacts by saying, “The transition, though difficult, will not affect most families.”

That’s an unacceptable argument. No child should be left behind. Every child matters. You can’t deny full IBI funding to a specific group of kids who were already deemed eligible for IBI, simply because they’ve turned five. It’s unjust, it’s inequitable and it’s not fair.

Why does this government think that children of a certain age with autism are only worth \$8,000 and a place on yet another wait-list?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** If you put my remarks from yesterday in context, what I was trying to focus on is that there is a group of the 40,000 children with autism in this process who are going to be experiencing the biggest changes through this new program. It’s important that we support them individually on a case-by-case basis, and that’s what I was talking about yesterday.

We agree that autism doesn’t end at five, and in the new program, all children with a diagnosis, including those children five and over, will get better service. They’ll get it sooner and it will be customized to meet their individual needs, including those children who need more intensive therapies and support.

This is a continuum of care we’re moving toward. We want to make sure that all children get the right support at the right age, based on clinical advice and assessment. That’s exactly what we’re going to do.

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## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, there have been questions raised about the future of natural gas in the province, following discussions about the upcoming climate change action plan. Consumers and businesses

are hearing from media reports and the opposition that they will be forced off natural gas into heating their homes with electricity.

The 2016 provincial budget committed to expanding natural gas to communities across Ontario, including communities in rural Ontario. Not only has natural gas traditionally been a very cost-effective option for home heating, it is very important to rural Ontarians and is used for many industrial and commercial agricultural activities.

Minister, can you please clarify for the members of this House and all Ontarians what this government’s plan for natural gas is?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member for Northumberland—Quinte West for this important question. He is a champion for concerns right across all of rural Ontario.

Let me be clear: Our government knows how much of a priority natural gas is for rural Ontario. Despite what the opposition or anybody else is saying, we’re not forcing anyone off natural gas. There will not be a climate change police in the province of Ontario seizing natural gas furnaces or fireplaces. That’s a false statement that people on that side are making. It is wrong, Mr. Speaker. We are not abandoning or reducing our investments in this area.

In fact, as the member knows, he mentioned our government’s commitment to expanding natural gas, including our \$200-million natural gas access loan program to be launched this year, and another \$30 million—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Another \$30 million will go towards the Natural Gas Economic Development Grant to extend natural gas to rural communities. This government is committed to expanding natural—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. I appreciate the minister providing clarification on this issue.

On this side of the House, our government has taken positive steps to combat climate change by curbing our greenhouse gas emissions and investing in renewable energy. Now, as we look to the future and envision what is next, we have to think critically at what the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions are in this province.

Buildings in Ontario accounted for 19% of our province’s greenhouse gas emissions in 2013, our third largest source of emissions. The good news is that the building sector also holds the most potential for delivering significant and cost-effective greenhouse gas emission reductions and will play a key role in providing transformation to a low-carbon economy.

Can the minister please inform the House on the specific role that natural gas will play in helping in the transition?



**Hon. Jeff Leal:** To my colleague, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I also want to thank my colleague from Northumberland—Quinte West. I am not going to be able to match the eloquence of the minister of agricultural affairs and food.

We continue to see a critical role in the energy mix for natural gas, including in trucking and other areas. That's why, this past February, Mr. Speaker, as you would know, our government announced a \$100-million partnership with Enbridge and Union Gas as part of the down payment on cap-and-trade. We will be presenting a plan—that will benefit customers and lower costs for households and businesses to reach our emissions targets.

Finally, I can say with confidence that natural gas will have an important role in that process. We will also continue to invest in fossil-free technologies that consumers choose to purchase as well. This is a good-news story.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. The minister and her colleagues ignored experts and thousands of parents when they voted down our motion to restore IBI therapy for children over the age of five.

The Raptors weren't the only thing lighting up Twitter last night: There were hundreds of tweets by parents and individuals who are disappointed—no, disgusted—with yesterday's vote.

One individual wrote to the minister stating, "Explain to me how your side's empty when it's time to listen and full when it's time to vote." Another wrote, "Disgusted with the Ontario Liberals tonight. They had an opportunity to do the right thing and voted not to."

These people won't give up. We won't give up. I ask again, will the minister reverse her decision and allow children over the age of five access to IBI therapy?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I don't think I have to tell my other critic here what I think she already knows. Members of this Legislature participate on committees and have other responsibilities, so not everybody from any party is in the House at all times. If that's what she's suggesting, I think that's outrageous.

But we do listen to parents; we do listen to families. And do you know what? When all members of this Legislature were speaking yesterday, I was listening. I was taking notes, particularly of the stories of families, because it helps inform the direction we're going. It helps inform the implementation of the new program. So I appreciated the participation of all members in the House yesterday.

I'll say once again, this is a historic investment of \$333 million on top of \$190 million a year and 16,000 new spaces. We want this to work for all children who require autism support services at the right time, at the right—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** The minister doesn't seem to understand the impact this decision is having on families. Here are some facts for you: It means Kelly McDowell's daughter—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Come to order. Supplementary.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** These are not my stories. These are stories from families. Kelly McDowell's daughter, who has benefited from IBI therapy to where she can now tell her parents that she loves them, will never be able to complete her therapy. It means Meghan Stevens's son, who has been told he is a perfect candidate for IBI therapy, will never experience that impact this life-changing therapy has.

It's time for the minister to do the right thing and reverse her decision so each child in our province can become the best they can be.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm worried about comments like children "will never" get a certain therapy. It sounds like the case the member is talking about is a child who is in IBI therapy. They will continue to get IBI therapy and they will be assessed by a clinician, and then the plan of action for that child will be determined going forward.

Let's not forget that it's her party and her leader that voted against this new investment in autism.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Absolutely. And their motion, as we discussed yesterday, would keep kids on wait-lists longer. That's unacceptable. We cannot have kids on wait-lists for the length of time they have been there now, growing to five years.

The new program recognizes that there is no age cut-off for services going forward, that there's a continuum of care required, that children will get the right support—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Dufferin—Caledon, come to order.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** —at the right time, based on clinical assessments, not by saying absolute—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### GOVERNMENT DEFICITS

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Today's FAO report is unequivocal in its findings. The government plan to reduce program spending is happening across most areas. Planned spending growth in health and education, for example, is at about half the rate it should be in order to keep up with population growth and other cost pressures.

According to the report, this means that program expenses would need to be \$4 billion higher by 2018-19

compared to what was written in the 2016 budget. Mind you, this is only if the status quo remains, and Ontarians know that the quality of public services under this Liberal government only continues to decline.

My question: How long are Ontarians expected to go without?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question. I also appreciate, as I've mentioned, the work done by the FAO in this regard, recognizing how important it is for us to take note of the fact that the structures in place, the status quo, must be amended without sacrificing the very services that are important to Ontarians, like health care and education.

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It's one of the reasons we're investing much more in health care: \$1 billion alone this year, as well as \$12 billion over the next 10 years to support new hospitals, new hospice care and new services for the people of Ontario when it comes to health care.

The FAO also makes reference to the fact that we are coming into balance. He also notes some of the risks that are involved that we must address. We are doing just that. It's also why we've built quite a bit of prudence into the system.

But the member opposite is asking a very important question: Can we stay the way we are or must we make the appropriate changes to improve our services while being mindful of the taxpayers as we proceed forward, balancing the books at the same time?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Mr. Speaker, this government likes to congratulate itself on having the lowest program spending per person in the country, but Ontarians know what that means. They are living a painful Liberal reality in Ontario. They know it means less money for health care. Our hospitals are already overcrowded, as we've heard. It means less money for education. Kids with special needs are already not getting the supports they need. And more money is spent cleaning up Liberal mistakes. All in all, it simply means less money for the things that Ontarians depend on, the people whom we're supposed to be working for, the people whom we are elected to serve.

My question is simple: When will this Liberal government put the needs of Ontarians first?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud on this side of the House that we have been putting Ontarians' needs first in every budget that we've presented and that I've had the pleasure of doing.

I must admit, I have to ask the member opposite this very question. On page 9 of her platform, they promised to make \$600 million in unspecified cuts every year. This member opposite stood and said that the way to find the savings, the way to make those cuts, is in health care, by her own admission.

We're not doing that on this side of the House. We're investing more in health care. We're providing for the people of Ontario.

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Mr. John Fraser:** My question is for Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. I understand that last week the minister was invited to be part of the Canadian delegation to the 15th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. I know that our government is committed to working with the federal government on issues of shared priority and concern. It's great to see that Ontario was asked to stand with Canada on the world stage at this important forum.

Can the minister please tell us more about his participation in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Thank you for that question.

It was a great honour to join my federal counterpart, Minister Carolyn Bennett; Ontario First Nation leadership, Métis leadership and Inuit leaders; and more than 1,000 other indigenous participants from across the world at the United Nations for this forum.

The overarching theme of this year's session was "Conflict, Peace and Resolution," leading to a very productive discussion on issues related to lands, territories, resources, rights and distinct identities.

It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to further join Minister Bennett in a forum discussion entitled Empowering Indigenous Women, with various delegations from Australia and New Zealand. Speaker, it was clear that Canada now has a voice on the world stage when it comes to indigenous issues.

I am proud that Ontario was able to be a part of that delegation. I am proud that Canada is back on the international stage.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much to the minister for the update on his participation at the United Nations.

It was also good to hear that he was invited to take part in the panel on empowering indigenous women. His exposure to the experiences of indigenous women in other countries and governments will be important in our own long-term strategy to end violence against indigenous women.

I also understand that, while at the UN, the minister's federal counterpart also announced that Canada will be removing its permanent objector status from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Speaker, through you to the minister, could he please tell us more about the lessons learned from his trip that will benefit the work of our government?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** As Ontario moves forward on the implementation of our long-term strategy and our response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it is important to consider the lessons we can learn from the experience and successes of other countries.

It was an honour, again, to join Canada for the Empowering Indigenous Women round table to hear the perspectives of other countries in addressing this very important issue. I thank Minister Bennett for this oppor-



tunity. It was great to hear a very good-news story that the federal government is reversing its stance on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Our government is committed to working with our indigenous partners as we follow the federal government's leadership in developing a national plan for the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. It concerns the future of natural gas, which this government seems intent to eliminate.

My question is why isn't the minister speaking up for affordable energy? Whose side is he taking? Is it the Minister of Economic Development, who wrote, "My ministry heard of the importance of natural gas.... In particular, we heard that remote communities face large expansion costs to access the resource"? Or is it the Minister of the Environment, who said that "home heating in the future is going to have to come from sources other than natural gas"?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I'm happy to speak to the member, particularly in view of the fact that he has rural constituents. He will know that we have taken some very significant steps to mitigate the costs in the rural areas. We do that by having a policy of expanding natural gas into rural communities. We're doing it through the Ontario Energy Board.

We've changed the regulations to allow a longer period of time to recoup the capital. We have the loan program for rural natural gas expansion. We have a loan program and a grant program for rural areas. We are taking all kind of steps. Hydro One has a new program for heat pumps which can be installed in rural residences and will take between \$800 and \$1,500 off their electricity bills every year.

We are working for the rural community when it comes to the prices of electricity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Back in February, I wrote to the government about the need for natural gas access in Milverton, which I represent. I've seen responses from the Premier, the Minister of Economic Development and the OEB, but not the Minister of Energy.

Now we know the Liberals are planning a \$7-billion climate plan which threatens to throw up new barriers to natural gas in rural Ontario. Unbelievably, it proposes to ban natural gas from all homes and small buildings built in 2030 or later. It's yet another Liberal policy dreamed up with zero thought to rural Ontario.

Will the minister stand with the people of Perth East and support the township's position on natural gas, or will he stand with his out-of-control colleague, the Minister of the Environment?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. I was trying to listen to the question when the member from Renfrew took me off my listening.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I would invite the member to inform himself as to what's happening at the Ontario Energy Board. He may not be aware of the fact that Union Gas has an application before the Ontario Energy Board. The hearings are in process to expand natural gas to five—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Huron—Bruce.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:**—rural communities. Union Gas is also working with 18 or 19 other rural communities to make similar applications before rural communities.

They don't want to admit, in the Conservative Party, that we are paying attention to rural customers. We're taking steps to mitigate their rates and we will continue to do so.

## SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

**M. Gilles Bisson:** Ma question est pour la vice-première ministre.

Madame la Ministre, ça va vous surprendre. Une personne qui déménage du Québec, qui s'en vient à Hearst et qui décide qu'il veut établir son commerce à Hearst—c'est des jeux gonflables. Il vient ici et s'organise pour être capable d'offrir ce service aux citoyens du nord-est de l'Ontario, mais quand il contacte, and I'll say it in English, the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, parce qu'eux autres ne font rien en français, il se fait dire, « Non, tu ne peux pas faire ton test en français. Non seulement tu ne peux pas l'écrire en français, mais tu ne peux pas amener un traducteur, même si, toi, tu le payes, pour être capable de faire ton test en français. »

Est-ce que la vice-première ministre pense que c'est bien qu'un francophone en Ontario peut se faire refuser le droit d'écrire un test avec the Technical Standards and Safety Authority? Est-ce que c'est une bonne affaire? Moi, je dis non.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The minister responsible for francophone affairs.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Premièrement, je veux remercier le député de Timmins—James Bay pour sa question.

Je n'étais pas au courant que ce processus-là était en place et qu'on n'avait pas le droit d'écrire les examens. Alors, je vais m'assurer de parler au ministre responsable pour corriger cette situation-là.

1130

Les francophones en Ontario devraient pouvoir avoir—spécialement dans la région du nord, où il y a beaucoup de francophones, et à Hearst, où presque 90 % de la population est francophone—des services en français.

**Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac):** Merci. Supplementary?

**M. Gilles Bisson:** Madame la Vice-Première Ministre et madame la Ministre, j'espère que oui, et j'espère que vous êtes capables de le régler. Dans les recherches que moi et mon personnel avons faites, on a trouvé que quand la responsabilité a été transférée à—puis je vais le dire en anglais—the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, ils ont été exclus de la Loi sur les services en français. Donc, il n'y a pas d'exigences dans la loi qu'ils ont besoin de donner ces services en français.

La deuxième partie de ma question : oui, aidez la personne à Hearst qui a besoin d'avoir son examen, mais on a besoin de corriger ce fléau et de s'assurer que cette organisation, comme les autres, se trouve sous la Loi 8 dans les régions désignées.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Le ministre des services corporatifs.

**Hon. David Oraziatti:** I appreciate the question from the member from Timmins—James Bay.

First of all, the TSSA is responsible for regulating fuel safety and other areas of safety standards. It is certainly my expectation of all of the delegated administrative authorities and agencies in the province that they conduct business in both official languages.

This is the first that I've heard of this issue with respect to the TSSA. I'm happy to have a conversation with the member opposite and follow up. I will be speaking, obviously, to the TSSA in regard to the way in which they conduct business with respect to their services, and that all Ontarians, whether they speak French or English, have access to all of the services provided by the TSSA.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. From my experience as a municipal councillor, I had a front-row view of the difficulties facing municipalities in delivering affordable housing. As this House will know, I have been a strong proponent of a planning tool called inclusionary zoning.

In many communities across the province, increasing housing prices and rent costs are making it difficult for people to find housing that they can afford to rent or buy. A few months ago, our government took actions to address this by releasing an updated Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. If passed, this would introduce legislation that would make inclusionary zoning a reality in communities across this province.

Will the minister provide this House with an update on the development of a proposed inclusionary zoning framework?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I thank the member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore and also the member from High Park, who both have a long history of advocating for inclusionary zoning. It's important.

Today, later this afternoon, I will be introducing the Promoting Affordable Housing Act, which would, if

passed, help to ensure that the people of Ontario have better access to affordable and adequate housing. These changes will enable municipalities to offer incentives and use other planning measures, such as height and density, to support the creation of affordable units in partnership with the development sector.

Speaker, our neighbourhoods are stronger and more vital when they include a mix of people who are able to choose where they live from a range of housing. That will be the intent of the legislation. I'm sure all members of the House will be delighted to see it this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** Thank you to the minister for his answer and for his leadership on this issue.

My community of Toronto has long sought the ability to have inclusionary zoning. Toronto's chief planner, Jennifer Keesmaat, has said that a lack of access to this planning tool has resulted in the loss of the opportunity to create tens of thousands of units that would be affordable. Inclusionary zoning has also been requested by York region, Peel region, the region of Waterloo, the city of Hamilton and other municipalities.

We recognize that inclusionary zoning is not a magic wand or a silver bullet that will do away with housing challenges, but what's important to note is that the proposed Promoting Affordable Housing Act will put forward other suggested measures to increase the supply of affordable housing in Ontario and continue the transformation of the social housing system.

Through you, will the minister highlight some of these other proposals in the bill?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** The honourable member is correct. In addition to the ground-breaking proposals associated with inclusionary zoning, there will be some other tools that will be made available which will allow our municipal partners who operate social housing more flexibility in administering and delivering social housing in their communities, helping to reduce wait-lists and, frankly, just making it easier for Ontarians to embrace a bunch of options.

Further changes would make secondary suites in new homes—a potential source of affordable rental units for low- to moderate-income renters—less costly to build by exempting them from development charges.

Speaker, with our proposed package of changes, we are taking meaningful actions to transform Ontario's housing system and end chronic homelessness within the next decade.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. My constituents are furious after the premature release of the minister's plan to abandon natural gas in Ontario. Mark called it a "lunatic plan." Mary said, "This had better be some sort of—"

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order. Start the clock.

Finish, please.



**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Mary said, “This had better be some sort of delayed April Fool’s prank.”

“I am beyond furious with this ridiculous plan,” wrote Joan.

Many have wondered how they will pay their bills, while others are worried about their jobs.

“There is basically one industry that provides economic safety in this county”—that’s the county of Chatham-Kent—“and it is Union Gas,” said Sharon.

Union Gas employs 850 people in Chatham-Kent and thousands throughout Ontario. We need these jobs.

Speaker, to the minister: Can the minister please let my constituents know—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Sit down. I stand, you sit.

Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As my colleague the Minister of Children and Youth Services said, it’s important to stick to the facts in these conversations. Fact number one, if I haven’t said it enough: We are not banning or removing natural gas heating or cooling. I don’t know how many times I have to say that. You’ll see it when the plan comes out.

But maybe the member could talk to my colleague—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —could talk to my friend from London North Centre. She’ll introduce him, in his neighbourhood, to Sifton homes, which is building net-zero, very low-cost “prosumer” homes, as they are called, where these people have the lowest heating and cooling bills, almost, in Ontario. They’re being built all around him.

When Ontarians choose those net-zero homes with very low costs, they should get help from this government too, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Back to the minister: The agricultural and greenhouse industry in my riding would also like clarification about the environment minister’s plan to abandon natural gas.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has been asking for an expansion of natural gas for years. This government was patting itself on the back for promising an investment in gas lines only a few months ago. Recently, the minister sent a letter to the OEB saying that the provincial government was committed to expanding natural gas service in rural Ontario. But now the industry is shocked after hearing that these plans may be abandoned.

Minister, you need to reconsider and ensure the need for natural gas expansion in Ontario.

Speaker, to the minister: Will promises made to expand natural gas lines in rural Ontario be honoured?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The investments we are making in more efficient natural gas, in cogen, in geothermal, in battery and a whole range of Ontario companies’ amazing technologies will give Ontarians more choice in home heating and cooling, lower costs and will reduce GHGs.

In fact, I’m working almost monthly with the greenhouse industry because part of the challenge with the changing climate is that we’re likely going to have to grow more food in protected environments. They’re co-authoring the plan with us. That will be a big boon in the ag sector. Don McCabe is on our working group. He knows. Maybe the member could talk to Mr. McCabe from the OFA to get his facts corrected, because Mr. McCabe certainly understands them.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Finance on a point of order.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I’d like to introduce our interns at the Ministry of Finance this summer: Marie Visca, Julia McArthur and Eduardo Rodriguez. They’re in our members’ gallery. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain on a point of order.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I had some guests join us after introductions this morning, so I’d like to welcome to the House my brother, David Taylor, as well as a family friend, Ken Hadal. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Davenport.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I’d like to introduce a constituent of mine from the riding of Davenport: Samantha Tome, who attends St. Joseph’s College School and was recently selected as a recipient of the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces National Citizenship Award and Scholarship. She is here today with her guidance counsellor, Aida Costa. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change on a point of order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I would like to introduce the team that worked on Bill 172 in our ministry: Myra Hewitt, Laura Nemchin, David Harth, Heather Pearson, Sheri Beaton, Lisa Blackwell, Steve Borg, Kaj Thiru, David Mullock and Iain Myrans. They’re a great team who work for us every day.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND LOW-CARBON ECONOMY ACT, 2016

### LOI DE 2016 SUR L’ATTÉNUATION DU CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE ET UNE ÉCONOMIE SOBRE EN CARBONE

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas / Projet de loi 172, Loi concernant les gaz à effet de serre.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the motion for closure on the motion for

third reading of Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1142 to 1147.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On May 10, 2016, Mr. Murray moved third reading of Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas.

Mr. Colle has moved that the question be now put.

All those in favour of Mr. Colle's motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Mitzie	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Naqvi, Yasir
Bradley, James J.	Kiwala, Sophie	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Leal, Jeff	Qaadri, Shafiq
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	Mangat, Amrit	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Martins, Cristina	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	McGarry, Kathryn	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	McMahon, Eleanor	Wong, Soo
Dong, Han	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Sattler, Peggy
Arnott, Ted	Hatfield, Percy	Scott, Laurie
Bailey, Robert	Hillier, Randy	Singh, Jagmeet
Clark, Steve	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Coe, Lorne	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
DiNovo, Cheri	Martow, Gila	Taylor, Monique
Fedeli, Victor	McDonnell, Jim	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fife, Catherine	McNaughton, Monte	Walker, Bill
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Gates, Wayne	Munro, Julia	Yakabuski, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Nicholls, Rick	Yurek, Jeff
Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 51; the nays are 35.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Murray has moved third reading of Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1150 to 1153.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Gretzky, Lisa	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sattler, Peggy
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Singh, Jagmeet
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Tabuns, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Taylor, Monique
DiNovo, Cheri	McGarry, Kathryn	Thibeault, Glenn
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Vernile, Daiene
Fife, Catherine	McMeekin, Ted	Wong, Soo
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	MacLeod, Lisa	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Smith, Todd
Coe, Lorne	McDonnell, Jim	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	McNaughton, Monte	Walker, Bill
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Harris, Michael	Munro, Julia	Yakabuski, John
Hillier, Randy	Nicholls, Rick	Yurek, Jeff

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1156 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to welcome some visitors who are here today for Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome Awareness Month. We have my son Mitch Martow, James Eubanks, Liza Butcher, Bettina Share, Kathleen Eubanks, Lindsey Czitron, Christina Butt, Taz Goddard, Holy Clayton, Alexandra Howell, Peter Balasis, Terry Howell, Ashley McKay and Elizabeth Butcher—they're all in the front row. As well, high up in the gallery we have Sylvia Stamou and Charlotte Lawrence Moody. Welcome, and thank you for coming.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have three guests today: Hieronim Teresinski, national president of the Association of Polish Engineers in Canada, and as well, from my riding of Windsor—Tecumseh, Ewa Barycka and Jerzy Barycki, president of the Polish Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? The member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I get laughed at, I guess. I don't know.



Mr. Speaker, I'd love to also welcome members from the Polonia community, especially the youth group Harnasie, from the Polish Highlanders Association of Canada, who are wearing beautiful Polish traditional costumes. Stand up and say hello. Welcome. I would also like to welcome Jerry Barycki, who is here today. Also here today is Teresa Berezowski, from the Canadian Polish Congress—I don't see her in the House yet—and Grzegorz Morawski, consul general of the Republic of Poland.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member would know that I would never laugh at him. I was actually laughing at myself, because you were standing and I was looking right at you and saying, "Who else is standing?" So I apologize. My vision is going. What can I say?

Further introductions?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would like to introduce Joe Vaccaro, from the Ontario Home Builders' Association, who is here. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We welcome all our guests and thank you for being here.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm proud to rise today to recognize the birthday of Karol Jozef Wojtyła, who was born on May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, Poland. He was the man who became known as the Pope.

St. John Paul II was elected by the second papal conclave of 1978 and adopted his predecessor's name in tribute to him.

He served as Pope of the Roman Catholic church from 1978 until his death on April 2, 2005. It's one of those dates that I'm sure we all remember what we were doing when we heard the sad news.

St. John Paul II was a widely admired figure, respected by Roman Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

As Pope, he travelled to every corner of the Earth.

We were very fortunate to host him in Ontario on two occasions, in 1984 and again in 2002, when he celebrated World Youth Day together with 800,000 young people.

He dedicated his life and papacy to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights.

St. John Paul II significantly improved the Catholic church's relations with Judaism, Islam, the Eastern Orthodox church and the Anglican Communion.

His message of hope, embodied in the phrase, "Be not afraid," inspired millions around the world, and his canonization ensures that it will endure into the future.

I was pleased to participate in the celebration of St. John Paul II's birthday today at Queen's Park, representing our leader, Patrick Brown.

I'd especially like to thank the youth present here today from the Polish Highlanders Association for

enriching the celebration not only with their costumes, but also with their music and singing, bringing Polish tradition to Queen's Park and showing how diverse Ontario is.

Mr. Speaker, as a Polish descendant myself, I am proud to rise in honour of Pope St. John Paul II. His life and legacy will always be remembered.

### GENERAL MOTORS IN OSHAWA

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Ten years ago, the General Motors car assembly plant in Oshawa was one of the most productive auto plants in the world. It topped the J.D. Power list for quality, and year in and year out, the workers at GM kept it that way. Oshawa was the crown jewel of General Motors. GM workers were promised that keeping Oshawa a high-quality, high-productivity producer would ensure the survival of the plant.

They also made money for General Motors, lots of it. In 1996, General Motors Canada was the first Canadian company to register a \$1-billion profit. At the time, 40% of GM's North American profits were coming from the 10% of their workforce that was running the Oshawa plant.

The workers at GM Oshawa have invested millions of dollars through payroll deductions back into our community. They've helped to expand the hospital; build a cancer centre, the YMCA and UOIT; stock the food bank; and generated millions more for the United Way. Their efforts have contributed billions of dollars to the Canadian economy, and the jobs at the Oshawa plant matter not only to our community but to Ontario and Canada as a whole.

Following the 2008 financial crisis, GM has returned to profitability after shedding its debt, thanks to the investment of the people of Ontario and Canada, as well as sacrifices made by the workers and retirees. While record profits should have resulted in reinvestment into the Oshawa plant, they have not. We have never felt more uncertainty about the future of General Motors in Oshawa than we do now. It is time for GM to commit and bring new product to Oshawa. Our community has earned it.

### BURLINGTON'S BEST AWARDS

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I rise today in the House to recognize the proud achievements of outstanding citizens in my riding of Burlington who were recently honoured at the annual Burlington's Best Awards on May 11. Burlington has been recognized by MoneySense magazine as the best mid-sized city for three years in a row and the third-best city in Canada. These accomplishments wouldn't be possible without the selfless contributions of our citizens. The Burlington's Best Awards provide an opportunity to thank those residents whose dedication contributes to making Burlington such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

This year's awards featured seven award winners from among 22 nominees. Award categories included the

Senior Person of the Year, the Junior Citizen of the Year, Arts Person of the Year, the Environmental Award, the Community Service Award, the Heritage Award and Citizen of the Year.

This year's winner of Citizen of the Year was Brenda Hunter. Brenda's leadership and dedication to the health care needs of the residents of Burlington and beyond, through her work with the Joseph Brant Hospital Foundation, continue to transform and inspire our community. As a leader of our hospital's Our New Era campaign, she played a major role in raising over \$48 million of Joseph Brant's \$60-million donor campaign. She also successfully led the One Room at a Time campaign, which raised \$400,000 in support of the new palliative care unit.

I'd like to congratulate and thank Brenda and all the winners and nominees of this year's Burlington's Best Awards for their continued selfless service to our community.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Financial advisers play a vital role in helping people retire with security and reach their financial goals. The financial services sector is a pillar of strength for Ontario's economy and contributes \$8.4 billion in direct GDP and over 84,000 jobs. Ontario needs a competitive market for financial services that offer consumers a range of choices and protection, including access to small business financial advisers.

However, the industry is concerned with the potential adoption of policies that have failed in other jurisdictions, policies that have made financial advice unaffordable. Ontario needs to be a leader in this regard, not a follower. We need policies to make financial advice more available to Ontarians, not less.

Speaker, I urge the government to end its pursuit of policies that will make financial advice unaffordable in Ontario. Instead, reforms should focus on strengthening the sector, including professional title protection for financial advisers, less red tape and greater accountability for clients.

### PROMPT PAYMENT

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Prompt Payment Ontario: Payment delays are the most significant limit on efficiency in Ontario's construction sector and the nearly 450,000 Ontarians who work in it. The delays create serious cash flow problems for subcontractors and for our hard-working tradespeople.

1510

Families in Ontario are currently waiting up to four months for their loved ones to get paid for construction work already completed and certified. This withheld money is taking billions of dollars out of our economy and severely impacting Ontarians. They cannot wait months or years for prompt payment to become a reality, because if they do, they face job loss and even bankruptcy.

Payment delays mean lower employment, that benefit coverage for workers is reduced, that apprenticeship opportunities are fewer and that the pool of bidders is reduced as trade contractors must limit their expenses due to the restriction in cash flow.

In March 2014, the government recognized these issues. In fact, the current Minister of Transportation introduced a PMB to address this issue. Unfortunately, it was scrapped just before an election, and since then, all we've had is a review of the Construction Lien Act.

Earlier this month, that report was submitted to the government, and I rise today to urge the government to immediately release the findings of the review to those that are most drastically affected by its outcome. We cannot wait any longer. Those directly affected must be made aware of the findings immediately.

### NURSES AT SICKKIDS

**Mr. Han Dong:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize and thank the nurses of SickKids Hospital in my riding of Trinity-Spadina. Last week, I was honoured to accompany the nurses of SickKids Hospital on their annual Take Your MPP to Work Day.

Between visiting the dialysis unit, where I met a family of Syrian refugees receiving treatment and services, to the cardiology floor, where a team of nurses worked 24 hours around the clock, rotating jobs, charts and working together to ensure the best care is given to their patients, the teamwork and the passion I saw from the nurses at SickKids was very moving. I'm proud to have them practising in my riding. They're truly the highlight of our exceptional health care system.

Thank you to all the nurses of SickKids Hospital for showing me the ropes, and thank you to all nurses across the province for the critical care you provide to Ontarians.

### EHLERS-DANLOS SYNDROME

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I just want to wish congratulations to everybody who's here with Ehlers-Danlos and those who are supporting their friends and relatives with Ehlers-Danlos. I'm going to read the proclamation that I presented to them. We took a wonderful picture and we had a nice lunch.

Congratulations to EDS Canada on the recognition of May as Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome Awareness Month. Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, EDS, is a genetic disorder involving mutations in connective tissue, characterized by instability and dislocations of the joints; skin that bruises, scars and tears easily; and arterial and organ rupture causing internal bleeding, shock, stroke and premature death.

There is neither routine screening nor a cure for EDS. Early and accurate diagnosis can provide opportunities for life-saving emergency medical plans and proper monitoring and can improve quality of life. EDS is frequently misdiagnosed or undiagnosed. Improved knowledge can



prevent generations of premature deaths, allow for effective management, improve quality of life, and reduce disability and pain.

I am pleased to congratulate EDS Canada for their advocacy work on behalf of all Canadians and their friends and relatives who face challenges due to this genetic condition. We celebrate May 2016 as Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome Awareness Month in Ontario, while eagerly looking forward to celebrating the opening of the first EDS clinic.

I want to say that the member from Kitchener-Conestoga is eagerly awaiting news, as am I, on when this clinic is going to open, as has been repeatedly promised by the Minister of Health. Unfortunately, the letters from his office are very inconclusive.

#### ROTARY CLUB OF TORONTO-DON MILLS

**Ms. Soo Wong:** This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Toronto-Don Mills. I rise today to recognize the contributions of this Rotary Club to the province and to the world.

For the past 16 years, this Rotary Club has been promoting oral health and awareness among young children from junior kindergarten to grade 6 through the Brush-a-mania program, first in the city of Toronto and then across the province. To date, the program has reached over half a million elementary students across the province.

Brush-a-mania is one of two big projects that this Rotary Club is involved in locally and provincially. In 2008, the club expanded this program to Armenia, where two mobile dental clinics were created to better serve the children there.

The club is also actively involved in the Rotary International project of the global eradication of polio. Last March, the club started the End Polio Now fundraiser. Their goal is to raise \$100,000, which will go to eradicating polio worldwide. The \$100,000 goal will become \$500,000, thanks to a two-to-one match campaign by the government of Canada and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

I want to thank three Rotarian members, Dr. Raffy Chouljian, Jennifer Boyd and Ryan Fogarty, who will be starting a six-day hike up Mount Kilimanjaro next month to raise funds for a polio-free world.

I want to also congratulate this club for their 60th anniversary and for their service above self. I look forward to celebrating with them this evening as they celebrate their 60th anniversary.

#### HOMELESSNESS

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** Unfortunately, homelessness occurs in too many communities in our province. In Etobicoke-Lakeshore, we do have two excellent Out of the Cold programs, run by All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church and by St. Margaret's church.

This winter, my constituency staff were happy to assist the volunteers and parishioners at St. Margaret's by cooking and serving a hot breakfast for their overnight guests. The program provides dinner, overnight accommodations, a full hot breakfast and a bag lunch to those who are homeless or hungry from November through April. St. Margaret's also offers its guests various forms of clothing and laundry services. A nurse comes in weekly to check out such problems as frostbitten hands and feet, as guests have many challenges to face when out on the street.

St. Margaret's volunteers and parishioners recently turned the tables when the program wound down in April, by inviting the various Etobicoke-Lakeshore groups who volunteered to assist with this year's program, including my staff, to a delicious evening of great food and conviviality at the church. Many thanks to Cara Wigle, Terry Greer, Tanya Imola, and so many more people who so generously give of their time to support others through this wonderful program.

Volunteering is a very rewarding experience in a friendly environment, where your time means so much to our community's most vulnerable when you participate in an Out of the Cold program.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 100, An Act to enact the Ontario Trails Act, 2016 and to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 100, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur les sentiers de l'Ontario et modifiant diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### PROMOTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACT, 2016

##### LOI DE 2016 SUR LA PROMOTION DU LOGEMENT ABORDABLE

Mr. McMeekin moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 204, An Act to amend or repeal various Acts with respect to housing and planning / Projet de loi 204, Loi

modifiant ou abrogeant diverses lois en ce qui concerne le logement et l'aménagement du territoire.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** The Promoting Affordable Housing Act would amend the Planning Act, the Development Charges Act, the Housing Services Act and the Residential Tenancies Act. Our package of reforms would, if passed, help to ensure the people of Ontario have better access to affordable and adequate housing. It would increase the supply of affordable housing through such tools as inclusionary zoning and modernize social housing by giving local service managers more flexibility in administering and delivering programs.

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AMENDMENT ACT (DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS), 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DU POISSON ET DE LA FAUNE (CORMORANS À AIGRETTES)

Mr. Bailey moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 205, An Act to amend the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 205, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la protection du poisson et de la faune.  
1520

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** This is the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Amendment Act, (Double-Crested Cormorants), 2016. The bill amends the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, to permit the hunting and trapping of double-crested cormorants.

### MOTIONS

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Minister.

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 47, 48, 50, 51, 52 and 53 be waived.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Oraziotti moves that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 47, 48, 50, 51, 52 and 53 be waived. Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Michael Chan:** May is South Asian Heritage Month. There are more than one million people of South Asian descent living in Ontario today, in the GTA, Hamilton, Ottawa, London and Windsor. They come from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, as well as parts of Africa and the Caribbean. The South Asian community is greatly diverse and it has strengthened Ontario. Festivities to celebrate South Asian Heritage Month will be held all across Ontario, giving us all a chance to learn about and celebrate the many contributions that this community has made to our economy, our culture and our neighbourhoods.

Since South Asian Heritage Month was proclaimed in the House in 2001, it has become our tradition to use this month to recognize and thank the South Asian community for contributing to the growth and quality of life in our province.

The first South Asian migrants to Canada arrived in Vancouver in 1903. But this is not a happy story. In 1914, under the immigration laws of the day, the federal government turned back a vessel off Vancouver carrying hundreds of Sikh immigrants. That vessel, the Komagata Maru, rerouted to Calcutta, where 19 of its passengers were killed in a skirmish with British authorities.

Speaker, I note with satisfaction that the Prime Minister has delivered a full apology in the House of Commons for this incident more than a century ago. The incident is a reminder that Canada has not always lived up to the ideals we hold dear now. Fortunately, we know better today. We know the value of immigration to our economy and our culture. The Prime Minister's apology is a way of helping us remember this value.

Today, Ontario's South Asian community is extremely diverse in culture, religion, language, heritage and tradition. Ontarians are fortunate to have this diverse community in our midst. We admire the work ethic and strong sense of family and community in the South Asian community.

Ontario has always welcomed immigration and celebrated the diversity it creates. We know this diversity makes us stronger and more attractive for further immigration.

Speaker, as Ontario's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, I also value the economic connections our South Asian Canadians retain with their former homelands.



Each and every newcomer to Ontario is a trade bridge we can use to increase the goods and services we export and make Ontario stronger. But most of all, South Asians are our neighbours and friends. They are our co-workers and community leaders. They are fellow Ontarians.

As we mark South Asian Heritage Month, let us celebrate the many achievements and success of South Asian newcomers to Ontario in the fields of education, health care, the arts, business, sciences and public service.

Festivities are being held across the province this month to celebrate the rich South Asian culture. I urge all Ontarians to join in.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's time for responses.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's an honour to rise and honour May as South Asian Heritage Month in the province of Ontario.

The history of the South Asian community in Canada has some of our greatest moments as a nation, but it also has some of our darkest. Today, on Parliament Hill, the Prime Minister is going to be apologizing for the actions of the Canadian government 102 years ago, when the Komagata Maru steamed into Vancouver harbour.

Canada, which had previously opened its doors to immigrants for decades and even centuries, unfortunately closed them to South Asian immigrants in 1908 with the continuous journey regulation, a policy for which the Komagata Maru remains the most powerful and regrettable symbol. A land that had become home for Scots fleeing clearings, Irish fleeing famine, African Americans fleeing slavery and Jews fleeing pogroms, had closed the door on people seeking a better life, an action we're now ashamed of, which says a lot about our history.

However, in an example of generosity that we would all recognize and proudly proclaim to be Canadian, the Sikh community in Canada at the time raised a considerable amount of money to help the voyagers on board that ship. Generosity and a characteristic helping hand knows no country of origin, but is apparently the most natural Canadian impulse. Even if it isn't expressed by our government, it's alive in parts of our citizenry.

Unfortunately, many of these laws and regulations would remain on the books in this country until after the Second World War and would prevent South Asian soldiers who had served alongside Canadians in Hong Kong and the Pacific from immigrating to Canada. Thousands of South Asians served alongside Canadians in both world wars. Sikhs and Pakistanis bled with Canadians in the trenches in World War I. Nepalese members of the Gurkha regiments and Canadian soldiers withstood German machine gunfire at Monte Cassino. At the Battle of Hong Kong, which Canadian kids are taught in history class to this day, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Queen's Own Rifles manned Allied lines along with members of the 14th Punjab Regiment and 7th Rajput Regiment. In fact, if a Canadian soldier found themselves in a foxhole in the 20th century, there's a very good

chance the soldier next to them in that foxhole was of South Asian descent. It has been my great honour to visit the homes of several friends in Brampton and Mississauga, in particular, to see the medals their fathers won at these battles. But our immigration laws wouldn't reflect that reality until the 1960s. Over the course of that decade, the South Asian community in Canada increased tenfold. Since then, Canada has been what it was during its first era of open immigration: It has been a refuge.

When Sikhs were persecuted in India in 1984, Canada provided a refuge from the violence. With the outbreak of the Sri Lankan Civil War, Canada provided a refuge from the violence. This country is at its best, at its strongest and at its most defiant in the face of oppression and violence when it's a home for the people fleeing oppression and violence.

It took a hundred years longer than it should have for Sikhs fleeing violence to find a refuge here. It took a hundred years longer than it should have for Sri Lankans and Tamils fleeing civil war to find refuge here. Our treatment of South Asians in the past has been deplorable, but now their story is our story.

**1530**

As you may know, I'm a huge sports fans, particularly a baseball fan. Mr. Speaker, there's a moment at the end of Moneyball where Billy Beane watches a kid hit a home run and fall on his way to second base, thinking he's only hit a double. The other team applauds when he finally crosses home plate. He says, "How can you not be romantic about baseball?"

Well, for Sikhs, the turban is now a part of the uniform of this country for Mounties and military officers. We recognize genocides in South Asian communities that brought so many people to this great country. My kids can celebrate and have celebrated Vaisakhi and Diwali. Indian Canadians have made major contributions to Canadian art and literature. Pakistani Canadians serve in this chamber, and they've played in the NHL. You can even watch Hockey Night in Canada in Punjabi. When you think about it like that, Mr. Speaker, how can you not be romantic about Canada?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I also am proud to join in, adding my voice, on behalf of all New Democrats and our leader, Andrea Horwath, in celebrating South Asian Heritage Month.

One of the things that's so beautiful about South Asia, and that I think needs to be highlighted, is that South Asia is actually very, very diverse. It's comprised of a multitude of languages, religions, cuisines and cultures. I want to pay homage to those various diverse cultures by doing a little run-through on some of the greetings.

Before I begin, there's a number of religions and I want to just acknowledge some of them. There's Hinduism, there's Islam and, obviously, Sikhism. There's Jain, the foundation of Buddhism and was in India. Christianity: Some of the oldest elements of Christianity can be found in South Asia. There's Parsi Zoroastrian, Animism, the Mool Nivasi spirituality, the aboriginal folks of South Asia. These comprise monistic beliefs as well as monotheistic and polytheistic.



Some of the greetings include: *Remarks in foreign languages.*

Some of the greetings in terms of languages—they are such a diverse land. I'm going to go through some of them.

*Remarks in foreign languages.*

There are so many languages; there's so much diversity. One of the things I think is so important for us to do in South Asian Heritage Month is to celebrate that diversity, to really provide an ability to look at all those different cultures and give them a space to celebrate that diversity so that we can come closer together. Often, we think there's so many things that separate us, so many things that divide us. The more we celebrate our uniqueness, our diversity, we actually come to realize we have so much in common.

One of the things that I think is particularly phenomenal about this month is the idea of celebrating those who have trail-blazed, those who have done so much to make the past easier for people like myself and future generations. When we think about what difficulty our forefathers and foremothers, or the generation before us, faced when they first came to Canada—the barriers they faced and how they overcame those barriers, how they surmounted those obstacles—I think it's particularly powerful to pay some respect to that.

CASSA is a phenomenal organization, and to celebrate South Asian Heritage Month, what they've done is chosen a number of trailblazers. I want to just list those trailblazers who are now celebrated this month for the 2016 campaign for South Asian Heritage Month. Some of those folks are:

—Sherene Razack, who is a distinguished professor at the University of Toronto;

—Ricky Veerappan, who is an officer in charge, involved with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bureau at York Regional Police;

—Uzma Shakir, who is the director of equity, diversity and human rights for the entire city of Toronto;

—Baldev Singh Mutta, who is the CEO of Punjabi Community Health Services;

—Renu Mandhane, who—we're really, really honoured—is the Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission; and

—Sheela Basrur, who was the former medical officer of health for the city of Toronto.

There are some phenomenal men and women who have been trailblazers in our community. I think it's such an amazing way to celebrate the month by recognizing those folks who have broken barriers in the fields of medicine, in human rights, in law and in policing. It really shows others that when we have people who have achieved so much despite some of the obstacles and barriers they face, we can also achieve those things.

I think that when we celebrate South Asian Heritage Month we, obviously, should celebrate our successes, but like others have mentioned, there were certainly some times in Canada where we—South Asians and other equity-seeking communities—faced a great deal of

barriers. If we want to really celebrate South Asian Heritage Month, we also have to recognize there are existing barriers that people face and there are ongoing scenarios that people still endure.

We need to commit to creating a society where we can celebrate our diversity but there are no barriers that people face based on the colour of their skin, where they come from, their language, their religion, their place of origin or any of their distinguishing features. They should be celebrated and not be cause for any barriers or obstacles in their life. That would be a way to truly celebrate South Asian Heritage Month. I'm honoured to share my voice in this celebration.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

I just wanted to let the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton know that we only speak two official languages in here and you've left our translators perplexed. I just thought I'd offer you that.

It is now therefore time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### PROMPT PAYMENT

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I have a petition entitled "Support Prompt Payment Legislation in Ontario," and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas delayed payments are a harmful practice in Ontario's construction industry;

"Whereas Ontario's trade contractors incur significant costs when payments are delayed from general contractors;...

"Whereas payment delays have led trade contractors to hiring fewer apprentices, which will lead to fewer qualified tradespeople in the future;

"Whereas prompt payment legislation offers government the opportunity to provide stimulus to the economy without spending a dime;

"We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario Legislature to support Ontario's construction industry by adopting prompt payment legislation as a means to address the payment delay issues in Ontario."

I'll send it over with a page.

### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have another 600 names from across Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the day of mourning is a day to remember and honour those who have been killed, injured or who suffered illness as a result of work-related incidents and to honour their families. It also serves as a day to protect the living by strengthening our commitment to health and safety in all workplaces in Ontario for the common goal



of preventing further deaths and injuries from occurring in the workplace;

"Whereas a workers day of mourning is recognized in more than 100 countries around the world;

"Whereas 1,000 Canadian workers are killed on the job each year and hundreds of thousands more are injured or permanently disabled;

"Whereas it is expected that more than 90% of workplace deaths are preventable and raised awareness of this fact is necessary. Every worker is entitled to a safe work environment, free of preventable accidents, and that we, as a province, are committed to reaching such a goal;

"Whereas our MUSH sector (municipal, universities, schools and hospitals) as leaders in their communities are not doing enough to recognize and raise awareness of the seriousness of workplace injury and death;

"Whereas the flag symbolizes us as a province, and the lowered flag is a powerful symbol of our shared loss and respect, brings focus to the issues and symbolizes we are united on this front as a province at all levels, not divided;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the workers of Ontario with swift passage of Bill 180, Workers Day of Mourning Act, 2016, that would require all publicly funded provincial and municipal buildings to lower their Canadian and Ontario flags on April 28 each year."

I agree. I'll give it to Spencer and send it to the desk.

#### HOME INSPECTION INDUSTRY

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the home inspector industry remains largely unregulated; and

"Whereas homeowners are increasingly reliant on home inspectors to make an educated home purchase; and

"Whereas the unregulated industry poses a risk to consumers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To protect consumers by regulating the home inspection industry and licensing home inspectors."

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and I will hand it over to page Aadil.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is actually generated from my colleague in the NDP from Hamilton Mountain, given to me by Sheri Robinson yesterday.

"Don't Balance the Budget on the Backs of Children with ASD.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the prov-

ince, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

1540

"Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

"Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

"Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

"Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

"Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

"Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation."

I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to page Isabela to take to the table.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Good afternoon. A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I fully agree, Speaker. I will sign it and give it to Emma to bring up to the front.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I have a petition here with hundreds of names from back home. It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas providing high-quality, universal, public health care is crucial for a fair and thriving Ontario; and

"Whereas years of underfunding have resulted in cuts to registered nurses (RNs) and hurt patient care; and

"Whereas, in 2015 alone, Ontario lost more than 1.5 million hours of RN care due to cuts; and

"Whereas procedures are being off-loaded into private clinics not subject to hospital legislation; and

"Whereas funded services are being cut from hospitals and are not being provided in the community; and

"Whereas cutting skilled care means patients suffer more complications, readmissions and death;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Implement a moratorium on RN cuts;

"Commit to restoring hospital base operating funding to at least cover the costs of inflation and population growth;

"Create a fully-funded multi-year health human resources plan to bring Ontario's ratio of registered nurses to population up to the national average;

"Ensure hospitals have enough resources to continue providing safe, quality and integrated care for clinical procedures and stop plans for moving such procedures into private, unaccountable clinics."

I agree with this, affix my name and send it down with Spencer.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that community water fluoridation is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations, including the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ontario Dental Association; and

"Whereas recent experience in Canadian cities that have removed fluoride from drinking water has led directly to a dramatic increase in tooth decay; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care urges support for amending the Fluoridation Act to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing urges support for the removal of provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario before the end of the first session of the current Ontario Parliament."

I will sign my name to it and give it to Aadil to bring up to the front.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Whereas the billion-dollar gas plants cancellation, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020; and

"Whereas the Liberal government wasted \$2 billion on the flawed smart meter program; and

"Whereas the recent announcement to implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program will see average household hydro bills increase an additional \$137 per year...; and

"Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

"Whereas home heating and electricity are a necessity for families in Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government's mismanagement of the energy sector;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario's power consumers, including families, farmers and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity."

I agree with this and will sign it and send it to the table with Isabela.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that



protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I'll sign my name to it and give it to Samantha to bring up to the table.

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I'm going to give this, after signing, to page Marthangi.

### HEALTH CARE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** For the fourth time, the member from Windsor-Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Why, thank you, Speaker.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Reverse the cuts to health care;

"Return to the bargaining table with the OMA (Ontario Medical Association) to resume negotiations for a fair physician services agreement;

"Work with all front-line health care provider groups to develop plans to create a sustainable health care system for the people of Ontario."

I agree. I'll sign it and give it to Laura to bring down to the table officers.

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to lower hydro rates.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Energy Board recently announced another increase to hydro rates, effective May 1, 2016;

"Whereas hydro costs impact everyone across Ontario, especially seniors and others on fixed incomes who can't afford to pay more as well as businesses who say electricity costs are making them uncompetitive, and

contributed to the loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs;

"Whereas a recent Auditor General's report found Ontarians overpaid for electricity by \$37 billion over the past eight years and estimates that we will overpay by an additional \$133 billion by 2032 if nothing changes;

"Whereas the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants costing \$1.1 billion, feed-in tariff (FIT) contracts with wind and solar companies, the sale of surplus energy to neighbouring jurisdictions at a loss, the global adjustment, and smart meters that haven't met their conservation targets have all put upward pressures on hydro bills;

**1550**

"Whereas the sell-off of 60% of Hydro One is opposed by the majority of Ontarians and is expected to lead to even higher hydro rates;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government stop the sell-off of Hydro One, and take immediate steps to stabilize hydro bills for all Ontarians."

I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to page Samuel.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, are being charged astronomical costs referred to as 'delivery fees';

"Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, would like the 'delivery fees' looked into and regulated so as to protect the consumer from big businesses gouging the consumer;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Stop Algoma Power's influx of fees for delivery and stop the onset of increasing these fees another 40% within four years."

I will sign it and give it to Marthangi to bring up to the front.

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario families and businesses have seen their hydro costs more than triple under the Liberal government since 2003;

"Whereas the Liberal government's unaffordable Green Energy Act, the \$2 billion wasted on the smart meter program and the \$1.1 billion wasted on the cancelled gas plants will translate into a further 42% increase in hydro bills over five years;

"Whereas the Liberal government's elimination of the clean energy benefit will mean an average" hydro "increase ... of \$137 per year;

“Whereas Liberal electricity policies have driven up costs and made living in Ontario less and less affordable and rendered our businesses less competitive;

“Whereas the Financial Accountability Officer confirmed the fire sale of Hydro One will leave Ontario’s budget worse off in the long-term;

“Whereas the planned syphoning off of the proceeds of the sale of Hydro One will leave ratepayers liable to pay the cost of retiring the utility’s \$27-billion debt;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the fire sale of Hydro One.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Julia.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The time for petitions is over.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WASTE-FREE ONTARIO ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO SANS DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 17, 2016, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur la récupération des ressources et l'économie circulaire et la Loi transitoire de 2016 sur le réacheminement des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to rise today to lead off the Ontario PC caucus's response to Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act. I'd like to take this moment to recognize all the people in my office who have worked so hard since February. Not only have we managed Bill 172, but in tandem, at the very same time, we stick-handled and managed Bill 151 as well, and all that goes with managing legislation through the process here at Queen's Park. I really appreciate your help.

With that, I'd like to carry on and share with you, Speaker, that the debate on reforming Ontario's waste diversion policies has been ongoing for many years. At times, it's been contentious. Even at the conclusion of our committee work last week, I shared with both the government and the third party in my closing comments that we were going to reserve the right to hold this government to account, with regard to making sure that we uphold our end of the bargain and make sure that industry has a clear path to innovate and realize efficiencies without government handcuffing them.

With regard to being contentious, at times, this particular effort to get to where we are today has given

rise to failed experiments, like the Liberals' disastrous Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act. But I think we have now landed on a compromise that has been a long time coming, and I'm sure all the stakeholders watching today will be nodding their heads in agreement.

We landed on a compromise thanks to the leadership of the Ontario PC caucus. All parties now agree that eco tax programs must be scrapped, Liberal recycling cartels must be dismantled, and private sector innovation and competition must drive results in the recycling sector. How did we get to this point, and why are the Progressive Conservatives' ideas finally being adopted by the government after so much disagreement? Well, I think it's important to recount some of the history of this issue to provide the proper context for this debate, and that starts with revisiting Bill 91.

I would like to start the story with the Liberals' failed Waste Reduction Act. In 2003, the Liberals ignored the widely supported Ontario PC waste diversion plan that was released the previous year. Instead, against the advice of every environmental and industry expert, they developed their own misguided plan. The problem was, it failed to meet the growing consensus among industry representatives, municipal officials, environmental organizations and consumer protection groups in just about every way imaginable.

At the time, Bill 91 purported to introduce reform, but in reality, it did nothing of the sort. Instead, it was a Liberal sleight of hand. It was an eco tax shell game that would have forced companies to either bury eco taxes into the cost of consumer products—like paint, batteries, TVs and iPods—or simply list the eco tax on the price tag on the store shelf rather than the consumer's receipt at the cash register.

Speaker, I'll never forget the day when the former environment minister, the member for St. Catharines, actually suggested Bill 91 would eliminate eco taxes. Some of you might remember it as well. When he made this claim at a news conference, the entire press gallery scoffed at this ludicrous and baseless suggestion. In fact, one reporter couldn't even help himself and he tweeted that the minister's comments amounted to one of the most disingenuous claims ever made by the Ontario cabinet.

I was so proud that, on that very day the Liberals announced Bill 91, our caucus opposed it and called it for what it was: an outright scam. Not only was it an eco tax shell game, but the bill actually allowed the Liberals to keep the recycling cartels under a different name: intermediaries. In other words, the Liberals would have kept the same system of cartels imposing eco taxes set and approved by the government while claiming it was different. Speaker, this was nothing but smoke and mirrors, and we see a lot of that today as well.

But getting back specifically to their waste-free attempt here with regard to Bill 91, our caucus very aptly pointed out that in a system in which government sets the desired outcomes, there is absolutely no need for any government-protected organizations that are shielded



from the competitive forces of the market. We only need recycling targets and standards, and once these are in place, it should be up to the private sector to meet them.

Long story short: Bill 91 was killed. Our sustained opposition to Bill 91 was met by rising concerns among Ontario businesses once the bill was being debated. But—and this is a good history lesson here—it was Heinz that finally got the Liberals to back off. Before the company announced it was laying off 740 workers at its Leamington plant, it had pleaded with the government to consider the economic impact of Bill 91. The Liberals chose to ignore those concerns until Heinz was forced to act. Guess what happened in 2003?

**Interjection:** Goodbye.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Exactly. Heinz announced it was leaving the province for a more competitive jurisdiction in the United States and left hundreds of men and women out of work in our province. The Liberals were speechless. They knew they were responsible for pushing yet another business out of Ontario. Under the increasing pressure and out of fears of further political fallout, the Liberals shelved Bill 91.

If anyone would like to have more insight into this Liberal failure, I would encourage you to read a very good article by the Windsor Star entitled, “Who Really Killed Heinz?”

Let’s talk a little bit about Bill 151.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** That was my riding.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** That’s right. Actually, yes, just to take a pause—that’s right. The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex just said, “That was my riding”—740 men and women lost their jobs, and they weren’t the only ones.

It’s a sad state of affairs that we have in this province, but we have to acknowledge that there is one thing we have to celebrate, and that is that the failure of Bill 91 led to where we have arrived today with Bill 151. Again, after the unmitigated disaster of Bill 91, a failure this government will have trouble living down, we have a new bill before us that actually has come into line with many of the same common sense proposals our caucus put forward in 2012. If only the government would have embraced our plan earlier, we could have maybe saved some jobs and increased Ontario’s dismally low waste-diversion rate, which has been stalled at 25% for too long. But it’s better late than never.

1600

For now, for those who may not recall, it’s worth highlighting what our caucus had put forward nearly four years ago. We had the foresight, the PC caucus had, to understand that Ontario required serious reforms to improve waste diversion. We had read the Auditor General’s report in December 2011 and understood the severity of the problem, along with the issues that had been ignored for far too long by this government. So we went to work and developed a bold new plan to increase recycling and reduce waste through innovation and competition among businesses in the private sector. Our plan was clear: Government would set measurable and

achievable recycling targets for businesses, establish environmental standards, monitor the outcomes and enforce the rules. That’s it. Aside from that, we would get government out of the way.

That means scrapping eco taxes and Liberal recycling cartels, and making individual businesses responsible for recycling. Our plan was based on the clear understanding that the recycling sector is a market, not a government program. If producers have the responsibility to recycle, they will find the most efficient and cost-effective way to carry out that responsibility.

I must say, our entire caucus is pleased to see that Bill 151 has in large part embraced this common sense approach, although we still have several concerns and reservations with the bill, which, as I mentioned at the outset, we reserve the right to go back and revisit in order to hold this government to account. I’ll detail that later in my speech.

Right now, I’d like to talk about the eco tax amendments. Most important, we are pleased that the government adopted several critically important PC amendments. These amendments will strengthen accountability and establish timelines for the phase-out of eco tax programs, as well as the windup of industry funding and organizations. The amended version of Bill 151 now includes three key changes put forward by our caucus:

(1) The authority must include progress updates in its annual report on the phase-out of eco tax programs and the windup of Stewardship Ontario, Ontario Electronic Stewardship and the Ontario Tire Stewardship.

(2) The minister must report these progress updates to the House every year.

(3) The government must have clear timelines and have them established in law to phase out eco taxes and wind up the IFOs once new regulations are in place. Once this transition is complete, the government will largely follow the PC proposal to set recycling targets and allow the private sector to determine how best to achieve them.

With the co-operation of the government, we were able to work out a way to address the concerns of our caucus while ensuring that consumers are protected, waste diversion is increased and the innovation of the private sector is unleashed.

Not to mention, once Liberal recycling cartels have been eliminated, Ontarians will no longer have to worry about the abuse of eco tax dollars. Taxpayers were outraged when they saw the Ontario Tire Stewardship blowing their tire tax dollars on, if you recall, fancy dinners of elk tenderloin, expensive bottles of cabernet sauvignon and lavish stays at the Fairmont Château Laurier. If there’s ever been a reason to abolish Liberal recycling cartels, this is one.

Any money collected for a specific purpose should be spent for that purpose. That clearly did not happen in the case of the Ontario Tire Stewardship. But I’m pleased to say, with our Progressive Conservative amendments to Bill 151, we will not have this type of abuse of public money in the future.



Now, let's talk about the other areas of support that we managed through. Another key change made by the government that we support is the inclusion of the Competition Act.

Our former environment critic—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Mike Harris.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** —Mike Harris, the member for Kitchener—Conestoga, highlighted the importance of subjecting the recycling marketplace to the Competition Act nearly four years ago in his first letter to the government, calling for reform. Again, back then, we demanded that the Liberals include this critically important provision in Bill 91, but they refused.

After years of denial, the government has finally come around and adopted this sound, thoughtful Progressive Conservative proposal. This provision is essential to ensure that the government can no longer create cartels or government-protected monopolies. Instead, each company responsible for recycling will have to adhere to federal competition laws. In other words, Speaker, this change will establish a recycling market that is fair, free and open. We welcome this reversal by the government and strongly support the inclusion of this provision in Bill 151.

Let's talk about the blue box. A day or so ago, we heard the Minister of the Environment talk about how they created the blue box. Everybody always has a chance to correct their record here in the House, but I haven't heard that correction so I'm going to suggest that maybe a little history lesson should be taken, because it was actually the Conservative government that started the blue box. We stand by that.

We were also pleased—

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Why did you make it blue?

**Interjection:** That's why it's blue.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** That's why it's blue. Think about it. Yes, innovation and efficiencies.

We were also pleased to work with the government to ensure that there's appropriate time and flexibility for transitioning Ontario's most successful recycling initiative, the Blue Box Program, which has Conservative roots, as I just mentioned. We all know that this important environmental program cannot be abruptly changed. That's why the Progressive Conservative amendments that were passed in committee take into account the very big differences between eco tax schemes and the Blue Box Program. Our amendments will allow for the quick elimination of eco taxes while ensuring a gradual, careful transition of the Blue Box Program. We structured the amendments this way to make sure there are no service disruptions and that the blue box continues to increase environmental protection in Ontario.

For more than three decades, this program has played a critical role in recovering paper and packaging so it can be recycled into new products. A large part of this program's success is the result of the Waste Diversion Act, which was introduced by the former PC government. And that's the history lesson that we need to ensure everybody is aware of.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Now we know the rest of the story.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Exactly. I'll share a little bit more detail in that regard. In 2002, we had the vision to pass this important piece of legislation so we could create a more stable funding formula for the Blue Box Program. Looking back on this achievement, it's truly rewarding to see how far Ontario has come in this area. Today, 95% of Ontarians have curbside recycling, and the blue box has achieved a diversion rate of more than 67%. This accomplishment is the result of the vision and leadership of the former PC government and the hard work and dedication of industry and our municipal partners.

Unfortunately, this program started to face major challenges, and I'll just repeat this: The Blue Box Program started to face major challenges under the Liberals. The government of the day has allowed Waste Diversion Ontario to pit industry and municipalities against each other in a bitter battle over services and costs. Each year, disputes over funding leave uncertainty for the next. Both sides have called on the government for a solution for years, but their pleas have fallen on deaf ears until now. Finally, Speaker, under pressure from our party, industry and municipal officials, the government has adopted a solution to stop the bitter fight over costs before it escalates to arbitration.

We are pleased to see that the government has adopted an interim solution to settle disputes until the Blue Box Program can be fully transitioned into an industry-led program. We are also pleased to see that the government has made changes to Bill 151 to ensure that municipalities play a role in facilitating this transition.

I hinted that there were a number of areas where we reserve the right to look out for and to evaluate. Speaker, I know you wish I could go on and that I could highlight even more areas of co-operation, but unfortunately, I cannot.

1610

Again, we're happy that the government has adopted many common sense proposals put forward by our caucus and voted in favour of our amendments to phase out eco taxes, but we are quite concerned that the Liberal government has refused to listen to our caucus, businesses, environmental organizations, municipal officials and public sector workers on several issues. I do have to reflect on that for a little bit.

First, we do not support the Liberals' plan to tie up businesses with red tape using policy statements. I highlighted my concerns about policy statements in my second reading leadoff speech. Not one of these concerns was addressed by the government in committee.

Second, we do not support the size and scope of the authority. We have been quite clear: We would abolish Waste Diversion Ontario and instead have a limited authority to collect data and monitor outcomes. Unfortunately, this bill continues WDO and gives it new powers, including enforcement.

Third, we do not support the creation of a new force of waste cops to police garbage cans and recycling bins across the province. Enforcement is a core responsibility



of the government and should not be outsourced to any entity.

Fourth, we do not support the environment minister's plan to intervene in the marketplace and begin dictating to companies how they should design their products and packaging. I spoke about this in committee and I spoke about this during my second reading debate. Designing iPods, computers and televisions is way beyond the legitimate scope of the government. We're calling on the minister to abandon this ridiculous proposal.

Now I would like to go through each of these areas in a little bit more detail to establish why they must be changed and why we will change them when we form government in 2018.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm just making sure everybody is staying intent.

**Interjection:** Good dramatic pause.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Thank you—intently listening. So here we go.

Here's one of the main areas that we do have a problem with, and that's policy statements. Let's start with one of the most troubling components of this process: the government's persistent dismissal of all concerns raised by our caucus, businesses and municipalities about policy statements. We've said it before and we'll say it again: The addition of policy statements is an unnecessary addition and it will only create space for regulatory overlap, duplication, creep and, ultimately, conflict.

We've pointed out that policy statements give the government enormous scope over the implementation of Bill 151 yet are subjected to limited oversight and regulation. Policy statements will simply create confusion amongst companies, organizations and anyone affected by the act. Worse, we have absolutely no idea how many policy statements the government will create or when they will introduce them. How are businesses supposed to plan over the long term when they have no idea if their planning will be effective or even relevant?

But like so many other sections of Bill 151, the Liberals claim that we shouldn't worry, that everything will be worked out once it's passed into law. Well, time and again, we've raised many real-life examples of why this government cannot be trusted. This assertion has been made many times before, with disastrous results. This government, as I said, just can't be trusted. One only needs to recall the Green Energy Act or this government's history of waste, mismanagement and scandal. Ontarians need to know the potential effects of the government's actions now, and not at some indeterminate time in the future when there will be very few channels to pinpoint and improve on flaws.

We aren't the only ones who are concerned about the authority. During committee depositions, we heard time and again from producers, environmental organizations, waste management experts and municipal authorities who highlighted their concerns about the Liberals' potential misuse and even abuse of policy statements.

Electronics Product Stewardship Canada, for instance, stated, "The proposed legislation does not provide enough comfort that policy statements will not be exploited to shortcut the regulatory process. There is a lack of clarity on how the policy statements can effectively tie policy and results back to the overall goals."

They continued by voicing their concerns that "policy statements are not grounded in law, and therefore create a grey area in terms of enforcement." Yes, you heard that correctly: Since policy statements aren't legislated, there is no way to repeal or express any objection with the ministry's direction on any issue, even if it seems completely unreasonable.

The Canadian Plastics Industry Association similarly noted that the development of policy statements provides the minister with too much discretion and ultimately limits the government's transparency and accountability. They too agreed that any policy interest outside of the legislation arena should be included in regulation to ensure a higher degree of transparency and accountability.

Then, in a similar vein, the Ontario vice-president of Restaurants Canada similarly stated that the "policy statements are given a lot of power in the legislation without specific restrictions on that power."

These are only a few of the many objections we heard from businesses and municipalities about policy statements. In response, our party moved a number of thoughtful amendments to address these very issues. Our objective was to remove policy statements and require the government to set new rules, standards and regulations. That way, they would undergo proper consultation and analysis.

In response, however, the government rejected every single one. We were simply addressing the government's ill-conceived plan to micromanage industry and make it harder to do business in Ontario.

Then, on a similar note, we were equally appalled by the government's eagerness to infringe on municipalities' decision-making abilities. As we pointed out in committee, the government is using policy statements as a vehicle to impose their will on lower-tier governments.

Despite our best efforts, municipalities will now have to modify their plans every time the province develops a new policy statement. You know what will happen then. Layers of unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy will grow and make it more difficult for municipalities to govern. And Speaker, you know very well that our party won't support any measure that increases red tape in our great province. With that attitude, it's even unclear if the government actually trusts municipalities at all when it comes to these issues, which in my mind is absolutely ridiculous.

Municipalities and local governments have demonstrated considerable leadership in waste management and have acted as creative partners for envisioning the future of waste diversion in our province. In recognition of this leadership, our party put forward a number of amendments that would have given municipalities more



flexibility when responding to provincial policy statements.

Once again, however, the government rejected every single one of these thoughtful amendments. It's a shame that the government is intent on refusing to improve this legislation. And in that light, let's talk about the authority now.

I'd like to take a moment to discuss the Liberals' dismal attempt to dismiss every single one of our efforts to reduce the size and scope of the new authority created under Bill 151. Our party has been very clear that we would abolish Waste Diversion Ontario. We said in this debate that we support an authority to collect data and monitor results, but that it should have no role in enforcement and remain limited in size and scope. Unfortunately, the Liberals simply assigned Waste Diversion Ontario more powers and gave it a new name: the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Oh, boy.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "Oh, boy" is right. Their continued support of this type of authority shows that the Liberals have not fully given up on their central planning approach.

And I'd like to remind everyone why the public has such a negative impression of WDO. WDO is the organization that surprised farmers with a 2,200% increase on farm tire taxes. It rubber-stamped \$40 eco taxes on TVs and it failed to oversee the reckless spending of tire tax dollars at Ontario Tire Stewardship. This toothless watchdog had no idea that OTS members were spending tire tax dollars on fancy dinners and expensive bottles of wine.

1620

So Ontarians need to ask: Why are the Liberals continuing to hold up this failed agency as the solution, just by a different name, and why on earth do they think WDO should be rewarded with new powers after years of incompetence? As you know, Speaker—and I'm sure members in this House will agree—the Liberals' approach just doesn't make any sense, literally and—

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Figuratively.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Figuratively—that's the word I was looking for. Thank you to my colleague.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** That would be like phasing out natural gas.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Yes, that would be kind of like phasing out natural gas. Phasing out natural gas doesn't make any sense either.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Or charging for air.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** We'd better not digress, though.

I'd like to quote my colleague the member for Kitchener-Conestoga: If you have an employee who fails to meet his obligations, "you don't hand him a promotion or give him a raise; you hand him a pink slip and show him the door." Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think that's exactly what is going to happen to this Liberal government in 2018. They have failed to meet their obligations, and they have failed to take sincere care of Ontarians'

taxpayer dollars. Based on what has happened this week—and you heard examples from my colleagues behind me—I think that Ontarians should be very seriously considering showing a pink slip to this government in 2018.

It's time for this government to finally realize that its bad behaviour will no longer be rewarded. In that same vein, with regard to WDO specifically, it's time to put this toothless watchdog out of its misery. Unfortunately, the Liberals can't fully accept the role of government as a regulator and the role of the private sector as an innovator. That's why, through our amendments in committee, we moved to scrap Waste Diversion Ontario and instead create a limited authority. These amendments would have reduced the size and scope of the authority. They would also have ensured that it wouldn't morph into the bloated disaster we currently refer to as Waste Diversion Ontario.

Many of our most important amendments aimed to encourage the authority to spend its finances in a fiscally responsible fashion. In fact, we attempted several times to increase financial accountability at the authority. That seemed perfectly reasonable, given the Liberals' history of setting up similar organizations and authorities that have wasted valuable taxpayer dollars. I'm talking now about the Ontario Power Authority, Ornge and eHealth, not to mention the millions of dollars squandered on gas plants and other forms of mismanagement. But the Liberals voted down every single amendment we put forward to ensure financial accountability at the authority.

Yet again, during deputations we heard from leading environmental organizations and business leaders who supported our thinking. For instance, we put forward a motion to make one of the authority's objectives the goal of maintaining a cost-effective budget. Makes sense; sounds reasonable, right? This measure would have simply encouraged the authority to spend prudently.

Another amendment would have allowed the authority to make bylaws on how it would maintain a cost-effective budget. A third amendment would have allowed the minister to include a requirement in a review of the authority about the maintenance of a cost-effective budget. A fourth amendment would have required the authority to include a description of its business plan and how it intended to adhere to a cost-effective budget. You get the gist, Speaker?

We viewed these amendments as important tools to ensure that the government didn't just hand out a blank cheque to its authority. Moreover, it would prevent excessive costs from being passed on to the consumer, because at the end of the day, when costs go up for business, the consumer ends up paying more. We truly hoped that this government would support any measure that helped guarantee the proper spending of Ontarians' money. But perhaps that was a bit too ambitious. The Liberals voted down each of our amendments and justified this response because the government had designed the authority's mandate to minimize the costs for the regulated community. I'm confident that future taxpayers won't feel the same way.



Our concerns about the authority's mandate weren't limited to its unwieldy budget, however. We were equally concerned about the authority's potential to become a policy shop. Now this should wake everybody up. We introduced several amendments that would have removed the authority from the consultation process and instead allowed the minister, as well as established advisory councils, to conduct consultations on resource recovery and waste reduction.

Our thinking was plain and simple: The ministry should manage the development of waste diversion policy in Ontario, not the authority. Allowing the authority to conduct consultations and drive policy would just expand the authority's mandate and duplicate the efforts of Ontarians' expertly trained public service.

Speaking about the authority's transparency and accountability, we were equally dismayed by the Liberals' refusal to modify their plan to modify the composition of the authority's board of directors. As I mentioned in my second reading remarks, the appointment process for the board is outrageous, and we heard that time and again from the stakeholders that we met with.

Let's review this for a second. To select the membership, the minister appoints five members who then turn around and elect six members. Just to recap, the minister's five appointees get to pick six more members. Now, I know the question you have is: If the minister wants to control the board, why doesn't he just come out and say he'll be selecting all 11 members?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** That was my question.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Very good. To think these five appointees wouldn't be taking their marching orders from the minister to select the next six members defies all common sense, just as the member from Prince Edward-Hastings has noted.

This process of selection defies, as I said, all common sense. Clearly, if businesses are going to take on full responsibility for recycling, the membership of the board should reflect their businesses. Otherwise, the board could be stacked with the Liberals' friends and stacked against the very businesses that are stepping up to the plate to increase recycling in our province.

To help fix the gross lack of transparency, our party submitted a series of amendments that would allow the authority's board of directors to establish designated waste subcommittees composed of brand holders, waste service providers and representatives of municipalities.

Our amendment also outlined the subcommittee's responsibilities to offer recommendations on improving waste diversion and to minimize costs for consumers and taxpayers. Once again, this seemed like a very practical and reasonable motion. Unfortunately, we were told that our amendments were unnecessary because we had the minister's word he'll establish subcommittees once the bill is passed into law. To make sure everyone is clear here, the minister we're referencing is the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. We know what he has been saying over the last couple of weeks: one week it's that he's getting rid of natural gas, and this week he's totally confusing Ontarians.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** He changes his mind more than he changes his socks.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** He changes his mind more than he changes his socks, it was just suggested.

What I find refreshing in this case is that industry is holding this government and this particular minister to account because nobody can trust him. For goodness' sake, I was at a luncheon where he claimed nuclear was going to be a stranded asset in 10 to 20 years. We just can't trust this minister and his government with anything.

You can probably understand why I'm a little bit skeptical when I hear the government say, "Trust us." I want this on record and very clear to everyone listening and watching: I am not apologetic to say I do not trust this government with anything, based on the manner in which they've conducted themselves, especially over the last four years, let alone the last 13 years.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** How many OPP investigations?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** We have five OPP investigations and failed, failed efforts, be it Ornge, be it eHealth, be it SAMS; the list could go on and on. Again, when it's suggested to us we should trust the minister with the appointments to this authority, I say no way.

Again, I come back to the fact that when the minister makes a claim about creating subcommittees without giving any indication about who or how these committees would be formed or whether their composition will reflect the waste topic under their consideration, you just raise question marks. Given the government's history of cronyism, what would stop them from packing these committees with their friends instead of experts? We know what happens when they listen to their friends: We end up with the Green Energy Act. We have to stand up and say, "No more." So in case you haven't guessed it, Speaker, the answer to this question, from the government, has been deafening silence, absolute silence.

1630

I know I've spent quite some time highlighting issues with Waste Diversion Ontario and the new authority, but there's still so much to say. Our caucus has significant concerns about the Liberals' plans to involve the authority in the windup process. I am very confident that my colleagues, as the third reading debate continues, will continue to use examples highlighting concerns around the authority and the areas within Bill 151 that we have significant concerns about and that we will be holding this government to account on. I can't wait for them to participate.

Now I want to talk about enforcement. I've spent a fair bit of time highlighting our party's major concerns with Bill 151's newly created authority and policy statements, but next I'd like to address the government's ill-conceived plan to enforce Bill 151. It shouldn't surprise you to hear that the Liberals seized yet another opportunity to expand the size of government and create space for bureaucratic overlap through this legislation. Rather than having the environment ministry's enforcement branch enforce the law, as we've repeatedly recom-



mended, the Liberals are creating a new department of inspectors, or what I like to refer to as “waste cops” because it’s another wasteful layer of bureaucracy.

Section 47 of schedule 1 gives the authority a new enforcement branch along with the power to conduct searches, seize documents and issue fines. I know what you’re thinking: Isn’t that the job of the ministry’s enforcement branch? Aren’t they more than capable of enforcing the law? These are valid questions, but unfortunately, no valid answers have been received from Liberals. For whatever reason, this government doesn’t seem to share our party’s faith in the professionalism of Ontario’s enforcement officers.

And, yes, you’ve heard me say this during my remarks. We know the hard-working men and women at the ministry’s enforcement branch will do a great job of making sure everyone plays by the rules. They have the expertise and the mandate to get the job done. They don’t need to stand on the sidelines while a new force of “waste cops” take over.

As my colleague rightly pointed out, we’re cutting nurses and introducing a redundant layer of waste cops. It’s unbelievable. There’s absolutely no reason why the Ontario Liberals need to reinvent the wheel, especially since there’s zero evidence that delegating enforcement to the authority will result in better, more timely or more effective enforcement of the regulatory standards under Bill 151.

In fact, the ministry has been around for over 40 years. It’s well-resourced, it has specialized inspectors already, and it has a highly distinguished investigation and enforcement branch. It also has an enforcement and compliance policy. In short, it already knows how to get the job done. For that reason, we believe the government, not the authority, should be responsible for oversight and enforcement.

Equally importantly, we are not the only ones with these concerns. We heard this logic echoed time and again by environmental activists, businesses and industry leaders during committee deputations.

As a representative from Environmental Defence, who I know this government listens to very carefully, simply put it: “It is important that the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change remain responsible for inspections and enforcement as it has the resources, mandate and expertise required.” That came from Environmental Defence. We know the government listens to Environmental Defence, so why didn’t they listen to them this time around?

A few minutes later, we heard the director of Canadians for Clean Prosperity reiterate that proper “enforcement will be a key element to making this new waste diversion system work,” and that “enforcement responsibility” must “rest with the investigations and enforcement branch of the MOECC....”

The following day, we heard the Canadian Environmental Law Association, or CELA, state that “environmental enforcement is a core government function that should not be downloaded or outsourced to a third-party

entity, especially one that lacks the enforcement track record, experience and resources of the ministry.” She concluded by reasoning, “I’ve read all the consultation materials and I’ve seen no compelling justification for transferring enforcement powers from the ministry to the authority.”

If industry leaders and environmental experts keep reiterating the same concerns about the enforcement of this legislation, why aren’t the Liberals listening?

Once again, our party submitted a series of thoughtful amendments to address the Liberals’ poorly thought-out plan. First and foremost, we wanted to reduce bureaucratic overlap and ensure that enforcement remained in the hands of Ontario’s highly qualified public service. Specifically, we introduced seven different motions that would have removed the requirement that the government appoint a separate body of waste cops through the newly regulated authority. That would mean that the government would have the option of relying on the ministry’s expert, competent professionals instead of recruiting, training and supervising a whole separate body of waste cops.

Plain and simple, we wanted the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change’s officers to be responsible for the environment. Amazingly enough, the Liberals refused to even grant us this very small, practical concession. The only response we received was, “The authority is an oversight body, and it’s very important to give compliance and enforcement tools towards its success in this regard.”

That doesn’t provide reasonable justification for the creation of an entire force of waste cops. Furthermore, were the Liberals implying that they don’t have faith in ministry inspectors’ ability to successfully enforce the legislation? Once again, it seemed like the Liberals either didn’t believe in the professionalism of the men and women in our public service—or are they actively trying to spend taxpayers’ dollars as quickly as possible?

Speaker, that really makes me question how the government can justify the creation of a separate authority that will only cost taxpayers more of their hard-earned dollars when Ontario remains the most indebted sub-sovereign jurisdiction in the western world.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It’s \$300 billion.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It’s \$300 billion, as my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings just said.

We heard from the FAO that if this government doesn’t pull their socks up, that debt is going to skyrocket to \$354 billion. We’re at \$350 billion-plus. That is something to very much be worried about.

When we have that amount of debt already on our shoulders, how can the government justify the creation of a separate authority that will only cost taxpayers more of their hard-earned dollars when Ontario remains, as I said, so much in debt?

My colleagues from the third party not only supported our stance on waste cops, but also put forward a series of amendments that mirrored our own. As my colleague from the third party so eloquently put it, it has been



pretty clear from the presentations by the environmental stakeholders that retention of enforcement and compliance powers with the ministry is critical to ensure that this whole operation is run in a way that is democratically responsive. Speaker, as I have just explained, we couldn't agree more.

We also both expressed our dismay at the government's seeming disinterest in businesses' and municipalities' desire to solve this problem. Unfortunately, opposition amendments about this issue were largely dismissed.

Speaker, to summarize, the government has heard from industry experts, environmental advocates and both opposition parties that their enforcement design will increase the size of government and drive up costs, with no guarantees that this additional spending will secure higher-quality enforcement mechanisms, and all precedence indicating that the new regulatory body will simply duplicate the efforts of Ontario's highly qualified, expertly trained public service.

Speaker, it's disappointing. I'm disappointed in this government's wasteful enforcement of its waste bill.

Now let's talk about the design. Let me touch on another contradictory and wasteful element of this legislation: the government's desire to micromanage businesses' packaging.

In the PC Party, we believe the government has no right to dictate terms and conditions to companies when it comes to the design and packaging of products. Yet under section 67 of schedule 1, this Liberal government is determined to do just that. Specifically, clause 3(c) prescribes that the government, through regulation, may require anyone with a waste reduction responsibility to take steps to "reduce the amount of waste generated at the end of the product's or packaging's life."

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Industry has long been effective at innovating and developing new technologies and methods that have allowed for the expansion of recyclable products from just paper and plastic to things like metals, organics and chemicals. Because of our confidence in industry, we believe that government should be responsible for setting targets and allowing the ingenuity of the private sector to determine how to best achieve them, not acting as judge and jury.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It's why we're in trouble right now.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** That's why we're in trouble now, I absolutely agree with the member from Niagara.

Unfortunately, this Liberal government has the audacity to believe that it can unilaterally influence global supply chains and enact regulations that tie the hands of innovators and entrepreneurs. At a time when industry and recoverable materials are leaving our province at a rapid pace, this is a serious concern to all. In fact, statistics from Environment Canada found that in 2011, Ontario accounted for 42% of Canada's exports of hazardous waste and hazardous recyclable material—or in other words, just under 200,000 metric tonnes.

I'd like to take a moment now and re-highlight a few stats that I shared in my second reading debate on this bill.

In a May 2014 report released by the Conference Board of Canada, analysts found that if waste diversion in Ontario were to reach 60%—as this government had aimed to do by 2008—it could support 13,000 jobs and contribute an additional \$1.5 billion to our provincial GDP. That means for every 1,000 tonnes of waste diverted, we could support two jobs. With this government's track record of discouraging business from setting up shop here, this can make all the difference to a family struggling to make ends meet. With so much potential to build Ontario's economy, we need to be doing more to encourage a homegrown waste diversion economy.

During committee, Speaker, our party introduced several amendments that would put the power to determine best practices back into the hands of the people with the expertise and foster a recycling economy. Specifically, we had six amendments that would address the industry's concerns over control of packaging design and would prevent the minister from interfering with the expertise of those who knew best. We felt that these amendments were reasonable and a responsible way to merge the interests of industry with an appropriate level of government oversight. Rather than require companies to take steps to design their materials in a particular way, we asked that the minister have companies consider new product packaging designs, which many are already undertaking.

We also proposed that, rather than the use of regulations to control the design of products and packaging, the minister instead use policy statements. Since they were going to be used in the first place, we wondered if the minister could use policy statements to encourage waste reduction connected with a designated material. Unfortunately, our efforts to improve this concerning practice of government interference were all rebuffed, with each of our six amendments being voted down by government members.

I said it in my debate at second reading and I've said it again today: The Liberals' approach to central planning is ineffective and offside with common sense, especially when you consider the fact they are overlooking serious considerations about food packaging that places Ontario at odds with federal health requirements.

In Canada, food packaging is regulated at the federal level by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency under the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. This law includes an extensive list of retailing and marketing requirements. As you know, there's pricing, bar codes, contact details for customer care or branding as well as the ingredients.

Furthermore, to preserve and extend shelf life, some foods require extra packaging. I'm thinking in terms of such things as potato chips. Seriously, when it comes to the bar codes and the size of nutritional facts, that is dictated by the feds at the federal level. It's nothing to play with. For those in food processing in particular,



sometimes it's a real challenge to make all of those federal requirements fit on your packaging.

I just mentioned that there are special requirements needed to preserve and extend shelf life, such as for chips and other snacks. We've all opened up a bag of chips to find that the bag is only half full. The reality is, though, the package is filled with nitrogen gas not only to act as a preservative, because potatoes spoil in an oxygenated environment and can go soggy if exposed to high humidity, but to act as a cushion to prevent crushing during the transportation process.

The specifications by Health Canada's CFIA, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, are in place to ensure that Canadian consumers are kept safe. The inclusion of these standards may at times require a few extra square inches, but it is a small price to pay to protect our health. If we allow industry experts the ability to innovate, this packaging will surely see new life in future applications.

But for this Liberal government to presume that it can dictate packaging terms contrary to Health Canada, however, is nothing short of reckless. We're seeing a lot of recklessness from this government these days. In this particular case, when they start tinkering with the packaging, there is potential that there could be endangerment to the health and well-being of Ontarians.

The industry concern that this legislation is at cross-purposes with other jurisdictions is not unique to the food packaging sector, though. Recently, I heard from Scotts Canada with respect to the classification of fertilizers. Under the current regime, Scotts produces products that are deemed to require special waste handling as municipal hazardous or special waste, despite many of their products being derived from natural ingredients such as corn. The result is that Ontario is grossly out of touch with the rest of the country with respect to this practice. Ontario is the only province that includes fertilizer in its MHSW legislation. If we are truly to be effective in fostering an environment of innovation and competitiveness, we must work to harmonize with the rest of the country so that Ontario is not imposing costs that other jurisdictions do not have.

It's time to start wrapping up. As you know, we have stood firmly—we, as the PC Party of Ontario—by the side of businesses and our brand holders and our producers, as well as our municipalities and stakeholders. We feel very strongly that government should be getting out of the way of innovation and efficiencies. We feel that there are justified concerns about wasteful spending and added layers of redundancy with regard to red tape and bureaucracy with the new force that's coming into play, and with regard to the new troop of waste cops this government wants to create.

We're also concerned with the manner in which the minister is going to personally impact who forms the authority. As we mentioned before, the selection of those 11 people is really and truly in the hands of one person, and that hand belongs to a person that we no longer trust here in Ontario. We cannot allow one person to select five people, who then, in turn, select six more. Really and

truly, we should be allowing industry and the people who are committed to recycling and to growing a recycling economy in the province to do their best. Therefore, government should get out of the way.

I have to tell you, Speaker, that I am proud of the work performed by the PC caucus of Ontario to develop Ontario's waste management strategy. As I mentioned earlier in this debate, after Bill 91, it seemed like our province might never adopt a successful vision to improve Ontario's low diversion rates.

I just need to take a break here for a moment.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** You're doing great.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Thank you. The hour flew by, actually.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It is Shane's birthday, too.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Oh, that's right.

But again, after Bill 91, we worried about where we were heading in terms of our waste diversion rates. We continue to be stalled at 25%. But fortunately, our caucus demonstrated considerable productivity and leadership in drafting a plan that would increase recycling, create good, well-paying jobs in the green economy and protect Ontario taxpayers by scrapping eco tax programs.

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I must say, Speaker, we are pleased that the Liberals have finally recognized the pragmatism of our waste management vision. With the co-operation of the government, we were able to work out a way to address the concerns of our caucus while ensuring that consumers are protected, all while waste diversion will be increased and the innovation of the private sector is unleashed.

It's particularly encouraging that the Liberals finally agreed to abolish their eco tax programs, which we all know were just ill-disguised tax grabs that did little to increase our waste diversion—and do you know what? The government committed enough time and flexibility to successfully transition Ontario's most successful recycling initiative, the Blue Box Program, which was started by a former PC government. We're confident that these important changes will help industry and municipalities increase their waste diversion rates while protecting those well-paying jobs and businesses.

Because of these amendments and because of the work that was achieved in committee by my colleague in the third party, as well as the government members who sat across the floor from us during committee, as well as the good work that was done by the members who supported me in committee, I will stand on behalf of this party and offer our support to Bill 151 today. However, Speaker, as I said at the conclusion of committee, we reserve the right to watch over this government. It's our responsibility to hold this government to account because there's still so much significant room for improvement in this legislation. We remain concerned that the Liberal government refused to listen to us in many important, pragmatic situations and instances where we could have improved this bill even more.

As I outlined earlier in my speech, we cannot support the Liberals' plan to tie up businesses with red tape using



policy statements. We cannot support the size and scope of the authority. We certainly cannot support the creation of a new force of waste cops. We cannot support the environment minister's plan to intervene in the marketplace and begin dictating to companies how they should design their products and packaging. Our party is committed to fixing these mistakes when we form government in 2018.

And that's it, Shane. Happy birthday.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I am proud to add my voice to the third reading debate on Bill 151. One of the things we need to make absolutely clear as New Democrats—we have been calling for individual producer responsibility for years. It's something we absolutely need to see. Waste diversion is something that's absolutely important, but one of the problems with this bill—and I encourage any of the members opposite to respond to this—is that more and more, we're seeing the government leave a lot or all of the essential elements of a bill to regulation, which means that timeline-setting and targets are all left out of the legislation itself, and that's really the main point. The goal of any sort of legislation around green initiatives, whether it's to tackle climate change or reduce waste, is to actually see a tangible reduction in waste or to see a tangible reduction in the emission of pollutants or contaminants in our water or in substances which will increase the rate of climate change. That goal is something that we're unable to really speak about because it's not included in the bill.

However, we're absolutely encouraged that this is a step in the right direction in terms of looking at how we can create a waste-free society. As developed nations around the world, we create far too much waste. We really need to develop strategies where we can innovate in such a manner that we're not creating the type of waste that we are. It's too far in the future now for us. We've come so far. It's really unacceptable that we're creating so much waste. There are ways to innovate and there are ways to ensure that we're not creating waste, and this bill seems to be at least a step in a positive direction to achieve that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to offer some comments on Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2016, and respond to the speech made by the member from Huron—Bruce.

The member from Huron—Bruce made some good remarks. She spoke at length about the bill, the process of formulating this bill. But I do have to say a few things about how you deliver these programs at the local level. The downloading that was put on municipalities and the financial stress that was put on them by the previous government when they then struggled on how to implement new waste diversion programs that are extremely expensive to implement properly—it took a decade to get over the downloading and start making progress on that.

Great progress was made, but those programs are inherently very expensive—to create plants to recycle materials, to do the processing of organic waste. They're not the old ways of dealing with waste that we were perhaps used to 20 or 30 years ago, where everything was just put in a truck and shipped away.

As the member from Bramalea—Gore—Malton so very correctly put it, it's about creating less waste in the first place. It's about producer responsibility. Rather than having the municipality chase every Styrofoam cup, coffee cup lid or piece of other packaging, let's have less of it coming into our homes, less of it going into our businesses, that the municipality is then responsible for collecting. That's what is a very important reform in this new piece of legislation, and it will help Ontario achieve a greener economy and a more circular economy and less waste.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to thank the member for Huron—Bruce, who has done an outstanding job on behalf of the PC Party in this role as environment critic. She's been a very busy lady. Her staff have been extremely busy over the last several months dealing with some large pieces of legislation. I think she's done an outstanding job in analyzing them and then, in committee, trying to make them better bills. She has had some success, as she noted at the end of her one hour of remarks here this afternoon, in finally getting the government to phase out the eco fees, which were just an eco tax. I commend her for doing that, and I commend the young man who had the position before her, Mike Harris, the member from Kitchener—Conestoga, who held that role prior to her.

The one thing that we've been trying to do as members of the official opposition is to make government bills better. It's difficult to do sometimes when they bring in things like time allocation or they refuse to hear from the public at committee, but our job as members of the official opposition is to bring those concerns to committee, bring those ideas to committee, and then propose the amendments to the government. While they didn't listen to all of the amendments, I commend the member from Huron—Bruce in getting the government to concede on the eco fees, which were doing nothing to improve waste reduction in Ontario.

The thing is, waste reduction hasn't changed. We're still at 26%. We have to do more to make that happen. But adding more bureaucracy and adding more red tape isn't going to accomplish that either. In large part, as the member indicated, this is what is going to happen as a result of this bill. In spite of the corrections that she's been able to make or the positive amendments that she's been able to propose, it's still a bill that is going to add bureaucracy and red tape.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It's always a pleasure to rise and talk about Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2015. I'm going to read a couple of lines here that I think are



important in the two minutes that I have. I think this is important for all of our members to think about.

"There is no timeline for when the transition to individual producer responsibility will be completed"—it doesn't make a lot of sense, but that's what it is—"or even for when it will begin."

"Despite its title, the Waste-Free Ontario Act has no legislated goal of a waste-free Ontario, although this" is a vision of a draft.

I want to touch on, because the Conservative Party talked about them, blue boxes. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario has "long advocated for ... producer responsibility for waste diversion programs...." AMO has also been concerned about the rising costs of blue boxes, imposed on municipalities by industry funding organizations. AMO notes that the bill itself will not resolve these important issues. That will depend on regulations. The transition will take an estimated three to five years.

1700

The NDP, as my colleague had said, has long asked for individual producer responsibility to replace the current system.

I want to close by saying a couple of words about our member Peter Tabuns, who got some positive amendments in place and who worked extremely hard on this file. He's going to talk about it for the next hour. I believe that you have your hour lead. I just want to congratulate him on the hard work that he did on getting positive changes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Huron-Bruce, two minutes.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I appreciate the comments that we heard this afternoon from the members from Bramalea-Gore-Malton, Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Prince Edward-Hastings and Niagara Falls.

This is something I think we should all feel good about. We finally have made it past the finish line with regard to Bill 151. In particular, we were able to do that because the government worked with us on three specific amendments that we were ready to go toe to toe on.

Again, just to revisit them: First, the authority must include progress updates in its annual report on the phase-out of eco tax programs and the windup of Stewardship Ontario, the Ontario Electronic Stewardship and the Ontario Tire Stewardship. Secondly, the minister must report these progress updates to the House every year. And third, clear timelines have been established in the law to phase out the eco taxes and wind up the IFOs once new regulations are in place.

Once this transition is complete, Speaker, the government will largely follow the PC proposal to set recycling targets and allow the private sector to determine how to best achieve them. This is something that we all can have some ownership in and feel good about, because of what will result in Ontario: We are going to see increased recycling rates, we'll see good, well-paying jobs in the green economy that will stay in Ontario, and we're going to protect Ontario taxpayers by eliminating the unnecessary and costly eco tax programs.

It wasn't easy to get here, but I appreciate the work that all of the staff has done to support us as members to get past the finish line. I would just like to say in my last 10 seconds that—to Shane, Jess, Lynn and Alison, our OLIP intern—I thank you very much for a job well done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak on this bill.

I had a chance to discuss this bill at second reading in February, and it has been a long time coming back to the House for a third reading.

We in the NDP will be supporting this bill not because we think it's a perfect bill, but because on balance, it seems to move things forward in terms of dealing with waste management and waste generation in Ontario.

I want to quote Mr. Richard Lindgren, from the Canadian Environmental Law Association, who made some opening remarks at committee hearings on this bill. He touched on some things that very much shaped our opinion of how to deal with this bill and really what's at stake in the province as a whole.

Richard Lindgren is a staff lawyer at the Canadian Environmental Law Association, and he had this to say in his opening remarks: "I have to mention that for the past 30 years, I have regarded myself as a garbage lawyer. I've represented Ontario residents who are opposed to or adversely affected by dumps, landfills and incinerators."

Now, Speaker, I have to say that back in the 1980s, in my riding of Toronto-Danforth, political activity was dominated by the fight against an existing garbage incinerator, the Commissioners Street incinerator, and by the potential for another giant incinerator to be opened in that community.

Mr. Lindgren is quite correct. The city of Toronto department of public health looked at the pollution coming out of the Commissioners Street incinerator. There was a steady stream of heavy metals: lead, cadmium and others. There was a steady stream of toxic pollutants: dioxins, furans. For me, this fight around the management of waste, the push to actually stop burning up or burying valuable materials, stop polluting communities, was a major start on my interest in working on environmental issues.

Mr. Lindgren and the Canadian Environmental Law Association, I guess it's now almost—no, it was 30 years ago, were an invaluable resource to our community and many others in Ontario that wanted to stop this pollution, wanted to stop odours, wanted to stop pollution of the water table. Thirty years ago, Mr. Lindgren and the Canadian Environmental Law Association were major players and are still very significant players in the environmental push to actually get a grip on waste management, waste disposal in Ontario, and develop a system that is far more environmentally benign, far more environmentally useful.

He went on to say, "It is beyond dispute, Mr. Chairman, that waste disposal sites can cause adverse environmental effects, particularly to air quality and water



quality. It's beyond dispute that waste disposal sites can cause serious nuisance impacts to nearby residents. It's beyond dispute that burning or burying materials represents a squandering of valuable resources that should be diverted, reused or recycled within the circular economy." And he's absolutely correct. He was absolutely correct.

I had the opportunity, when I was the environment critic for the NDP back in 2006-07, to visit the residents in the Napanee area who were fighting the expansion of a major landfill. They took me down roads alongside that landfill where leachate, contaminated liquid, was leaching out of that landfill, pouring down limestone rock face, effectively sterilizing the area around it. This was an area of dead trees, of stagnant, stinking water. That community, like many others, was profoundly concerned about the impact of dumping waste in that community, the impact on groundwater, the impact on air quality and the impact on their quality of life.

It's quite correct as well to say that when you are taking large volumes of material—metals; fibre, like paper—when you're taking plastics, when you're mixing them all together and dumping them in a giant pit, you're taking large volumes of very valuable materials that could be used to build the economy, used to displace imported raw materials, and throwing them away. The approach we've taken to waste is one that has undermined our economy, lessened our potential for economic growth, as well as damaging our environment. Mr. Lindgren was correct. We have to move away from a society of "burn it or dump it" to a society where we treat all of those waste materials as raw materials for reworking and development of our economy.

Speaker, I'll be ranging over a fair amount of ground in this leadoff, but I want to start by talking about some of the amendments we were able to get into the bill and amendments we put forward to address problems in the bill. Unfortunately, some of the concerns we had weren't addressed in this process.

I do want to note that the minister and his political staff were willing to discuss differences and concerns, and where we were able to find common ground, they were willing to work through and find a resolution, see if there was an amendment that we could put forward or they could put forward that would address our joint concerns. It's not always a process that gives you what you want, but I think it's a process that all our constituents want. If you talk to the parliamentary assistant, I'm sure her constituents would want her to work with the opposition and the third party to find common ground and a solution that suited everyone. Certainly, I think that's a fair description of where my constituents are at. They want us to look for practical solutions to problems. They want us to work, where we can work together, and bring things forward. Now, on occasion, they do want us to hold the government's feet to the fire on other issues, but where it's possible to work together, they like that.

1710

I also want to thank my colleague from Windsor-Tecumseh for being willing to share committee work

with me. These last few weeks have been fairly intense. I have responsibilities in dealing with the cap-and-trade legislation, so I found myself bouncing back and forth between committees. If it weren't for the member from Windsor-Tecumseh, who was willing to sit in on committee for many hours, Speaker—many, many hours—it would have been impossible to cover all that was covered. So I want to thank him for his generosity with his time and with his advice.

Now, there are few broad themes in the amendments that we in the NDP brought forward in this bill. We felt it was very important to actually define the terms that this bill would be operating with. I'll get into more detail on that, but a vagueness in the bill doesn't help industry, doesn't help municipalities and doesn't help deal with environmental issues.

We also needed a change in the way municipalities were treated. Again, I will get into that, Speaker, but municipalities are full partners in waste management and recycling, in reuse across Ontario. They were very vocal about what they needed in the bill. It was pretty clear, in bringing this bill forward and moving it through the legislative process, that full respect had to be accorded to municipalities and that the bill needed changes to ensure that they were treated properly.

Lastly—and this is something that my colleague from the opposition touched on: retention of powers of enforcement and compliance with the ministry, rather than spinning those off to yet another authority. I'll enlarge on that, but, in my mind and the minds of my colleagues, enforcement is something that should be carried out by a governmental organization—by the Ministry of the Environment. They have a legal framework that they operate within. The ministers are accountable to the public and accountable here to the Legislature. Frankly, Speaker, that isn't what you would necessarily get with a designated authority. In fact, we have problems with that. I'll go into that later.

So let's start off with definitions. Now, for those of you who are watching this on television and may want to click over to another channel like The Shopping Channel or whatever, I will not be reading from a dictionary for the next half-hour, so I'm not going to define every term that I'm going to bring forward. But I want to say that there were some things that were obviously missing in this bill.

The bill is, in part, entitled the circular economy act. When we got the bill, that term, which is in the title, wasn't defined in the document itself, which I think is a pretty large omission. If you think that a circular economy, an economy in which waste materials become raw materials, raw materials become products, which in turn become waste, and then become raw materials again—that needs to be defined. If it's something you want to promote, if it's something that you want to attain, then you need to say exactly what it is. Simply having the words in the title is inadequate.

I have to say that we were able—we put forward an amendment. The government didn't agree with our



amendment. They put forward an amendment; it was serviceable. We supported it. I have to say, the parliamentary assistant in her leadoff the other day said that there were a number of amendments that came forward; many of them were sparked by us, particularly around definitions. They accepted some of ours, and they put forward some of theirs that we were able to support.

I want to go back to Mr. Richard Lindgren and the Canadian Environmental Law Association and his comments on definitions: that for the purposes of greater certainty, upfront definitions are preferred—no question, Speaker. All our bills start off with definitions. It's logical. It means everyone has common understanding of words and what they mean and common understanding of terms and what they mean. He noted, when we were going through this process and getting some objection to putting definitions in, that leaving the key terms undefined but mentioning them in the regulation-making authority is like the tail wagging the dog. If the key terms are not defined, then their precise meaning or effect remains unknown, unless and until the actual regulations are produced, and who knows what that will be. Speaker, that continues to be true. I don't know when the regulations are coming forward.

My colleague from Bramalea-Gore-Malton talked about this bill being enabling legislation, and he's quite right. What this bill does is simply erect a scaffolding, a framework within which rules can be written. That's highly problematic. I've dealt with this a number of times in this Legislature.

I understand why it's to the government's advantage to do that. It's faster to just bring forward the scaffolding, but many of the key decisions are ones that are embodied in the regulations, regulations that don't have to come back here for debate, don't have to come back here for scrutiny and don't have to come back here for a vote. That's a problem. It makes no sense at all when you're talking about the fundamental underpinnings of a piece of legislation, the definitions, to effectively leave them for the regulations to sort out later.

He noted that the terms—"recycling," "reuse," "circular economy" etc.—require definitions since they're sprinkled throughout Bill 151, not just in the regulation. So there was a gap right at the beginning of this bill: the common understanding of what terms and language meant.

The Recycling Council of Ontario spoke to this issue as well, and I'm going to quote briefly from Jo-Anne St. Godard from the Recycling Council of Ontario, who also appeared before committee. She started off by introducing herself:

"If you don't know us, RCO has a 35-year history with a sole focus on the elimination of waste. Our role in bringing public and private interests together to create the world-renowned Blue Box Program is how we are most recognized. However, even with extensive focus and investments made to reduce household waste, the reality is that Ontario's combined recycling rates, away from home and household together, remains at a low 25% and has been there for more than two decades."

This is an organization that's had a long history. It has recognized the fact that Ontario hasn't done what it's needed to do on waste management. You, Speaker, have dealt with a landfill in your riding, one that has been highly problematic. You're well aware that Ontario has not done what's needed on waste management, on protecting communities from the fallout from that waste management.

Back to Ms. St. Godard: She noted that "Ontario still generates more than nine million tonnes of materials a year, six tonnes of which are still wasted in disposal." So the overwhelming majority of those waste materials that could be raw materials are simply dumped or burned.

Talking about this bill, this legislation is not simply about the blue box and packaging. In fact, it provides an opportunity to get at the heart of our disposal issue in the industrial and commercial sectors. That's very important, because we actually have done relatively well—not solved the whole issue—on the residential end, but we've done spectacularly badly on the industrial and commercial end.

She talked about the need for definitions. "As stated in the draft strategy on page 5"—a consultation document that was released a while ago—"Bill 151 offers to maximize the reintegration of recovered materials back into our economy. It is important that the act and the regulations formed under it require environmentally superior management approaches that follow the 3Rs hierarchy"—reduction, reuse, recycling.

"It is critical that the legislation clearly define what is meant by those embedded terms that describe these superior management approaches. These include definitions specifically for terms such as 'reduce,' 'reuse,' 'recycle' and 'resource recovery' as well as 'circular economy.'"

Again, Speaker, you don't have to know a lot about legislation to know that you have to have key terms defined right at the top, right at the beginning, at the outset.

"Without these key definitions, we don't make clear the main intent of the bill, which underpins the provisions that embody it. Without definitions that can be referenced, the marketplace will likely apply their own and may choose less desirable approaches, undermining the bill's intent."

She's absolutely right. Again, if you, in the legislation, don't define what the different terms mean, then you have what we sometimes call the devil's playground: room for all kinds of mischief by those who are engaged in a particular industry, all kinds of wiggle room for defining something that's really disastrous as something that's really wonderful.

I'm sure you are aware of that process, Speaker. I think you have probably seen it in your daily work life in this building.

1720

So, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Kenora-Rainy River.



**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Thank you, Speaker. I don't think that we have enough members in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Clerks' table will check for a quorum.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short):** A quorum is present.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay, we just have it. Thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Thank you, Speaker.

One of the things that I tried to address in this act right at the beginning was putting in a definition to exclude incineration as a positive or useful part of the whole waste management process. Now, I wasn't successful, but I want to say why I think it's important that incineration should have been explicitly and clearly excluded.

There is a lot of money to be made in burning garbage—a lot of money. This province, for decades, has been fighting companies and individuals who want to build plants that burn garbage. It's very lucrative—bad news for the environment; bad news for those who live nearby because of the dumping of toxic materials out of the smokestacks; bad news in terms of very useful material being burnt up. Material that could be raw material for industry gets burnt up, and what you get out is a large volume of material dumped into the atmosphere, which we get to breathe. It makes our lungs, in the end, the landfills—not a good thing.

And you get toxic waste. The better the scrubbers on any incinerator, the more heavy metals and the more pollutants, toxins, dioxins and furans that are captured, the more toxic the waste that comes out of those plants. So instead of, in fact, producing material that will be useful in the long run for industry, what you get are waste materials that are expensive to manage and, frankly, bad news for any community that has to be the recipient of those materials.

I also want to say that garbage incinerators need garbage as their fuel. To the extent that they need garbage, to the extent that they want to have a steady flow of waste that they can burn up, there is a profound, concerted interest in making sure that garbage continues to flow. Why would you recycle when you have these companies that are politically powerful who want to be able to get that material and burn it up? They make their money off burning. So to the extent that this government would push garbage incinerators out of the way, that's environmentally to our advantage, and I'm very sorry that the government wasn't prepared to put a definition in the bill that would have excluded garbage incineration.

I also want to note—and this came up, I think, with the member for Niagara Falls's comments—that there is a waste hierarchy. We tried in this bill to incorporate a definition so that when the government was making policies, they followed the hierarchy. Because when you reduce waste, when you reuse waste and when you recycle waste, there are very different implications. To the extent that you reduce the amount of waste, you reduce the cost of processing the material. That's extra-

ordinarily useful. When you are able to reuse something, you reduce the amount of energy needed to reprocess material; you increase the lifespan of a material in the economy as a whole. And recycling, far better than simply dumping waste in a pit, still can be very energy-intensive.

I want to say that back in the 1980s, when I was engaged in the fights over garbage incineration, I had a chance to talk to a fellow called Steve Shrybman, who is an environmental lawyer with a very deep and profound understanding of the issues. He, at a public meeting once—and it stuck with me over the decades—held up a pen. Given it's a prop, Speaker, I won't hold it up for long; I'll put it away. But you look at a pen and you need to understand that that pen is an extraction of large numbers of raw materials that have left a lot of waste in their background. There's metal there, so there would have been slag. There would have been a variety of tailings that would have been dumped out of a mine that would have extracted that metal. There's plastic, so there would have been waste from a plastics plant. You may have a pen that's relatively small, maybe the size of your finger, but you're talking about waste maybe in the tens or twenties or maybe a hundred pounds' worth of waste out there. So each time you are able to preserve that very concentrated piece of energy and material, that pen, and reuse it, you avoid generating tens, perhaps hundreds, of kilos of waste in other situations.

So for us, when we set our waste management policies, the most important thing we can do is reduce waste right off the top. Look for solutions that allow materials or products to last for very long periods. To the extent you do that, you substantially reduce the amount of waste that's generated in their production. To the extent that you're able to reuse something—beer bottles. I know that is something that's popular in this room, and perhaps popular in the province as a whole; I'm not sure, but I think they are. If you're able to take a beer bottle and use it to—what can I say?—transport that beer to the consumer who will be, generally speaking, very happy with that process, take that beer bottle, wash it, refill it and put it back on the shelf, you've reused a product and you've dramatically reduced the amount of energy that has to go into producing another beer bottle.

When you recycle, when you take old glass and you have to process it, sort it, make sure all the colours are in the right areas and then melt it, you use a huge amount of energy. Not as much as going from raw sand to glass, but you still use an awful lot of energy. Recycling is better than simply building new products from virgin material, but still not as good as waste reduction or reuse. We tried to get that hierarchy built into the bill. Unfortunately, that wasn't accepted. Speaker, we actually have to, when we're putting forward environmental legislation, think about the hierarchy of actions that allows us to maximize our impact. That's something that this government should have incorporated into the bill. I'm sorry that they weren't able to do that.



So our first area of concern, definitions that would set the trajectory for the bill—very important. We got some things that were useful and lost on others. That's life.

The other thing that we were very concerned with, Speaker—and you've sat on a municipal council, I seem to remember. I think there are a few here who have sat on boards of education, some who have served their time in those institutions that we love and we refer to as municipal council and boards of education. Municipalities in this province are the primary partner of producers and the provincial government in dealing with waste. They operate waste collection operations. They operate recycling. They have fleets of trucks, the administrators, the transfer stations. They have all of that infrastructure in place. And they've made it clear, through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, that they have found it financially challenging to deal with these materials.

They spoke at committee, and they spoke to many of us individually. I don't know who all in this room had a chance to talk to AMO, but they certainly weren't slackers when it came to buttonholing MPPs and trying to put forward their case. They have big operations. They have big costs. They're not annoyances; they're not incidental. They're partners and need to be treated as such.

So I introduced an amendment that would have given municipalities a more formal role in this whole process, setting up a municipal advisory body, bringing in representatives from the municipalities, from the commissioners of works, so that there would be a body that the provincial government would consult with—the people who actually do most of the waste collection, who do most of the recycling collection. Unfortunately, my amendment was defeated by the government. I note that they did, in a few spots, give greater access to municipalities to the process through consultation. That's not a negative thing. It falls short of where I think the municipalities should be but it was still, I think, provoked by us and by the municipalities. We got some useful movement.

1730

I want to quote from the comments of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario at the public hearings on this bill. Mr. Gary McNamara, president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, came and spoke to us. He had this to say: "Municipal governments have long advocated for a new legislative framework for waste management in the province, and we support the introduction of the act....

"We do support the clear intent of the proposed act to move to producer responsibility and have producers—not the municipal tax base—fully fund the costs of managing products and packaging at the end of their useful life."

What he had to say here is very important, Speaker. Municipalities have been given, I think, an undue financial burden for providing social and other services in this province. We all went through the downloading exercise under Mike Harris back in the 1990s. Municipalities have never fully recovered from that. They have difficulty

carrying the financial burden around waste management and recycling. I think any of us who go door to door in our ridings have heard from our constituents, particularly seniors on fixed incomes, who find it very difficult to deal with the rise of property taxes. I think it's incumbent on us to protect those constituents, those seniors, those property tax ratepayers who find it difficult to cover this whole infrastructure. So he's right: It's the producers who should be carrying the bulk of the cost, not the municipal taxpayer. I don't generally use that term but, in this case, technically, I think I'm being quite correct.

He went on to say, "The act allows for an ability to increase producers' current funding cap of the Blue Box Program beyond 50%. This is needed, given our years of receiving less than the full 50% we expected under the current act. Since 2004, this lost funding has cost municipal governments and our residents \$233 million. We went to arbitration in 2014 on this issue, and it remains in dispute as we speak today."

Now, that goes back a bit to this necessity of clarity around definitions, of seeing who is responsible for what. To some extent, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario was saying to me that a lack of clarity and definitions has allowed some producers to say, "We're not responsible for that. It's your problem. Get used to it," and has led to unfortunate wasted spending on legal actions, on arbitrations.

There is a scene from Dickens in the novel *Bleak House*. If anyone's ever read it, there is a scene at the beginning describing how a number of people are in court over many, many years fighting over an inheritance. There are banks of lawyers in that court—no disrespect to lawyers. Life's life; you've got to have a living. But I have to say that most lawyers would agree that unnecessary legal action is simply a drain on the economy. In *Bleak House*, the lawyers on either side of the issue fight for years over an inheritance until, ultimately, the inheritance is completely eaten up with legal fees.

Municipalities in this province occasionally find themselves in *Bleak House*. They are spending a lot on legal action when action on the part of this government to clarify definitions and clarify who is owed what under what circumstances would allow municipalities to give their ratepayers a better deal and, frankly, allow them to avoid unnecessary legal expense.

AMO went on to say, "There is a stated intention to ensure service standards and geographic coverage are maintained or improved." Good idea. "If packaging and designated materials can be sold anywhere in the province, then there needs to be a diversion program to make sure that these resources are recovered."

And he's right. If you happen to be in Timiskaming or Kapuskasing or Hearst, if you happen to be in Red Rock or if you happen to be in Fort Erie—it doesn't matter where you are in Ontario; you should be serviced by those producers who are selling those products so that the waste materials at the end of the use of that product are recovered.



AMO went on to say, "Although we are supportive of this draft legislation, we do ask that some key issues are addressed by amendment by this committee in Bill 151 through your deliberations.

"Municipal governments are responsible for an integrated waste management system. Our current diversion programs under the Waste Diversion Act and" the regulations "represent less than 20% of the tonnes municipalities manage and an even smaller percentage of the total costs municipalities incur to operate our systems.

"The future decisions and regulations made regarding these new diversion programs will impact roughly 80% of the integrated waste management systems that municipalities will still be responsible for operating and funding. This includes landfill and other disposal facilities, litter, organics and water systems.

"I think you know that we are not merely an interested stakeholder in this matter, but rather, local governments that will always have a major responsibility in waste management. Therefore, our first key ask is to have a formal seat at the table during transition of the current diversion programs and after the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act is in force."

Speaker, when the Association of Municipalities of Ontario comes and says, "We need to be treated as a partner," they speak from the reality of their experience that they are the ones out there running the trucks, the transfer stations and the staff to collect the waste, whether it's for disposal or recycling. They made an entirely reasonable request. I find it unfortunate the government wasn't willing to listen to that request, because I think it would have signalled a new respect for municipalities and a respect for a partner who is going to be vital to any successful program in this province.

The municipalities asked for action on fair funding. Mr. McNamara again: "Our other key ask is an amendment to section 11 of the Waste Diversion Transition Act regarding payments from producers to municipalities for the operation of the Blue Box Program. At present, the current ... language is identical to" a section in the Waste Diversion Act. "This same section was the subject of an arbitration in 2014 between AMO, the city of Toronto and Stewardship Ontario. Despite our clear municipal award, stewards continue to dispute the interpretation of this section. We implore the standing committee to amend the language to clearly state that municipal governments should be paid the applicable percentage by producers for blue box services based on the verified net costs of the program, as determined through the WDO. We respectfully ask you to make sure the section 11 language of the transition act is crystal clear and non-disputable by parties when you report back to the Legislature."

I'm sorry to say, Speaker, that our motion to solve this problem was rejected. The government put forward their own amendment—not as good as ours, but one that went some distance to solving the problem. I think it would have been better to use ours. I think, again, that to send municipalities to that bleak house where their funds and

the funds of other participants are eaten up in legal action is a disservice to municipalities and a disservice to people struggling with property taxes around this province. It's as simple as that. Property taxpayers—it's a flat tax. It doesn't reflect ability to pay. It doesn't reflect income. It's a much tougher burden for them, particularly for those on fixed incomes. I'm sorry that we weren't able to get what we needed to get from the government on this part of the bill.

1740

Jo-Anne St. Godard, whom I noted earlier, of the Recycling Council of Ontario, put forward similar concerns. She said, in committee, "I'd like to speak now about the bill's structuring of producer responsibility. RCO recognizes that producers are the actors that have the best opportunity to redesign products and systems to eliminate waste. Assigning them full responsibility for end-of-life management of their products is consistent with that principle. Ontario is going to go through a transition phase as municipalities become service partners to obligated stewards. Having said that, it should be noted that if a producer fails to meet its obligations in the act, municipalities will likely have to manage those associated stranded tonnes, at a cost to their taxpayers. Therefore, we suggest a provision in the act that allows municipalities to be the beneficiary of any penalties or fines for non-compliance."

Speaker, we brought forward an amendment to that point. We weren't successful. I think Ms. St. Godard makes a good point. If a producer ignores the law, frustrates it, flouts it, and the municipalities get stuck with the cost, then if there are penalties applied to that producer for their failure to comply with the law, it's the municipalities who got stuck with the cost who should wind up with the money. Right now, that's not the case, and I think that's a mistake. Again, I think the municipalities need to be treated fairly, and they need to have access to the payments that are made when producers ignore the law.

The last theme I want to address with regard to amendments is that of the role of the ministry in enforcement and compliance. My colleague from the opposition addressed that at some length in her commentary.

In this case, I'm going to go back to the comments of the Canadian Environmental Law Association that were delivered by Mr. Richard Lindgren. He said, "We're ... recommending that compliance and enforcement should not be carried out by the new authority under Bill 151. Instead, Bill 151 should be amended to ensure that compliance and enforcement activities are conducted by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

"In our view, Mr. Chairman, environmental enforcement is a core government function that should not be downloaded or outsourced to a third-party entity, especially one that lacks the enforcement track record, experience and resources of the ministry. Simply put, there is no evidence that delegating enforcement to the authority will result in better or more timely or more effective enforcement of the regulatory standards under Bill 151."



Speaker, he was entirely right. I'm going to expand on his remarks in a few minutes. But, really, in the end, the delegation of enforcement authority to bodies outside the government is not something that ends well.

If I remember correctly, one of the contributing causes of the French Revolution back in the 1700s—

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Whoa.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I've got the attention of a government member. I relish it. I relish it—was the whole question of tax farming: the delegation of tax collection to private companies that would go out and squeeze every last penny, every last sou from the good citizens of France. It contributed to an alienation of the people from the government of that time. It undermined the credibility of the government. It privatized enforcement of a very important function, and that was tax collection.

We've seen similar problems where the TSSA, Technical Standards and Safety Authority, have had an opportunity in this House, in the past, to deal with amendments to the TSSA after the Sunrise Propane explosion.

I have to say, Speaker, that it was an eye-opening experience for me to go through that bill and through that debate, because the explosion that happened in North York here in Toronto was not an isolated incident. There had been a previous incident further east on the 401, I think it was towards Bowmanville, where a propane facility blew up, raining propane canisters down on the 401.

When you're talking enforcement, you don't want to be in a situation where you have enforcement officials who are driven by the interests of the producers, of those who, in the end, don't want to enforce against themselves. You want it in the hands of civil servants, properly trained, who have no economic interest in the outcome of that enforcement. I have to say, with the TSSA, we saw the results of poor enforcement in very dramatic ways in this province.

Earlier today, my colleague from Timmins—James Bay was talking about the TSSA in his riding refusing to allow someone setting up a business to write examinations in French, to even have someone translate for that person for their examinations, something that wouldn't happen with a crown corporation.

I think one can make a very good argument that the transfer of enforcement and compliance, the designation of authorities outside government, is not a good thing for Ontario—not a good thing in this area.

**Mr. Lindgren:** “On this point”—regarding enforcement and transfer to the authority—“I will simply say that I've read all of the legislative debates during second reading of this bill, I've gone to the consultation sessions, I've read all the consultation materials and I've seen no compelling justification for transferring enforcement powers from the ministry to the authority.”

I want to enlarge on what he said, because he actually made a separate submission to the government that I think is worth quoting. He talked about this transfer of enforcement abilities: “We submit that it is not appropriate for the authority to be given compliance/enforce-

ment powers or responsibilities under the” Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act. The Canadian Environmental Law Association, the Citizens' Network on Waste Management and the Toronto Environmental Alliance “have no objection to the standard suite of compliance/enforcement tools contained within the RRCEA, but we maintain that these tools should be used by ministry staff, not outsourced to an authority with no history of compliance/enforcement activities. Accordingly, section 77 of the RRCEA must be amended to delete the reference to the authority, and to specify that it is the ministry that ‘shall exercise powers and perform duties in relation to compliance with and enforcement of this act.’

“The reasons supporting our position were outlined in a 2013 letter to the minister (and the Attorney General) in relation to Bill 91”—and I'll just touch on those points.

“Any delegation of enforcement powers from the ministry (which has the necessary resources, mandate and experience) to a third-party entity (which has none) will seriously threaten the administration of justice in Ontario.”

A strong first point. We have a body of people trained in enforcement who have the ability, the history to carry this forward. That isn't the case with this authority that's going to be created under this act.

“There is no evidence to substantiate the apparent belief that transferring enforcement powers from the ministry to a third-party entity will necessarily result in more timely or effective enforcement of environmental law.” Good point.

“To the contrary, evidence arising from the track record of the Technical Standards and Safety Authority”—the TSSA, which I just talked about in very affectionate terms—“(which assumed compliance/enforcement powers from the Ministry of Government Services) has been troubling and problematic, as confirmed by the provincial Auditor General and other commentators.

“Transferring enforcement powers to a third-party entity raises concerns about independence, credibility and fairness, particularly if the entity is being expected to conduct prosecutions against its contacts within the regulated sectors.”

Again, Speaker, it brings us back to the conflict of interest. The people who will run the RRCEA, the waste authority, are going to be the ones that the enforcement has to be carried out against. It doesn't take a lot of imagination to see quickly where there will be conflict of interest in this matter.

1750

“Law enforcement is a core government function that should remain within government itself for accountability purposes.

“Despite such concerns, the ministry now claims that there is stakeholder support for empowering the authority to undertake compliance/enforcement activities.” He goes on to say—and I agree with him absolutely—“Even if this is true,” even if the stakeholders think, “Hey, this



is a great idea: private police force, unaccountable to government. We like it. It's a good idea." He says, "Even if this is true"—even if they like it—"it must be noted that such views are not determinative"—that's right, just because they like it doesn't mean we have to do it—"nor are they unanimous within the environmental community or the public at large."

I think, if you went around this province and said to people, "How do you feel about private police forces coming out and enforcing the law?"—I would say, "Speaker, most people don't think that's a good idea." It's not surprising to me that the official opposition opposes it. It's not surprising that we oppose it. What's surprising is that the government endorses it. It's a mistake on their part.

"Moreover, this claim"—that it's supported by stakeholders—"does not satisfactorily address the fundamental legal and policy concerns about this unjustified departure from current compliance/enforcement practices under Ontario's environmental laws. Indeed, we are unaware of any evidence demonstrating that the authority's predecessor (Waste Diversion Ontario) is foundering due to a lack of its own compliance and enforcement powers."

He's right. I don't remember getting emails from my constituents. I don't remember a lobbyist coming to my office saying, "Jeez, it would be a lot better if this was enforced by a private police force." No, that's not an issue. People understand that government has the authority to enforce the law. It's a social compact. People aren't allowed to engage in vigilantism. There is an understanding that we have a central body, people who are given the training and the authority to enforce the law. To the extent that we privatize that, we undermine the credibility of law enforcement officers and law enforcement, generally.

I'll just finish off with his comments: "On this point, we note that the ministry's slide deck presentation"—in their consultation in advance of Bill 151—"during the regional consultation sessions simply asserted that the authority 'needs' appropriate compliance/enforcement tools. However, no evidence or arguments were presented to verify or substantiate this so-called 'need.' Similarly, the draft strategy contends that the authority should be responsible for ensuring compliance with the RRCEA, but the strategy does not provide any reasons why this should be the case."

I didn't hear many reasons, Speaker. I didn't hear a full-throated defence on the part of the government for privatizing the enforcement and compliance function. I think, frankly, it's a cost-cutting measure: Move it out of the ministry and let this new authority deal with that expense. I don't think that's a valid reason for privatizing law enforcement or privatizing the enforcement of environmental laws.

"Accordingly, CELA, CNWM and TEA submit that the ministry has fundamentally failed to justify its proposal to download compliance/enforcement powers to the authority. In short, there is no rational public policy basis for this extraordinary and ill-conceived proposal." They're absolutely right.

It is a major point. We may all agree that it's a good idea to make this transition; we may disagree on the level of support and respect that should be accorded to municipalities. But in the end, there should be no disagreement on the need to retain enforcement and compliance in the hands of the ministry.

Last words from the Canadian Environmental Law Association: "It may be argued by the ministry that the authority is best placed to ensure compliance with requirements developed under the RRCEA. In response, CELA, CNWM and TEA submit that such arguments are not persuasive, particularly since there are instances where the ministry undertakes compliance/enforcement activities under specialized standards developed outside of the ministry itself. For example, while regulatory standards under the Nutrient Management Act are developed by the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs ... these standards are actually enforced by" Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change "staff, not OMAFRA or a third-party entity."

Speaker, there are a number of areas where I disagree with the government on this bill. This is a major area. I think that the government is making a mistake. I think, as with the TSSA, that this will come back to bite us another day. I don't think that the government has given adequate justification for this change and, frankly, I don't think that there is adequate justification for this change.

I've touched on the three main areas where we were trying to get amendments: the question of definitions, the question of treatment of municipalities as full partners and the question of enforcement. Those three areas are where we spent most of our time and energy in trying to get shifts in the bill, and we got a few.

I want to talk about just a few of the other amendments that we brought forward, because I think the bill would have been better if they had been incorporated. We tried to change the bill so that at every point when materials were being collected from the waste stream and used, they would be used for their highest and best use.

Speaker, you can take fibre, you can take paper from the waste stream and you can reprocess it into new paper—probably the highest and best use—or you can use it just as a filler somewhere. There are very different uses for the material we recover from the waste stream. To the extent that we maximize the value of that material, we increase our economic potential in Ontario; we reduce the need for more expensive material production later; we are better off economically and environmentally. Unfortunately, the government was not open to that.

The government was open to an amendment that we put forward with regard to the whole question of a strategy. We asked that "in order to support the provincial interest, the minister shall, no later than 90 days after this section comes into force ... develop a strategy entitled Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario ... publish it on a website of the government of Ontario."

Speaker, there's no getting around it. It's true for a cap-and-trade bill, it's true for a pension bill; it's true for any bill. Making sure that the public has access to the planning done by the government and has access to its



thinking in terms of strategy so it can assess it and hold the government to account is to the benefit of this society. It's a benefit to society as a whole, and one that needs to be incorporated in legislation. I'm glad that one went through, because I think that people need access to that information.

Frankly, as I think was noted by a speaker earlier, there were no timelines that were visible in this bill. It's pretty short on timelines. Making sure that, at least, there is a 90-day timeline for putting out a strategy and making it available for the public: That was an advance.

Speaker, we asked for an amendment that would require performance measurement for reduction of waste disposed—not just waste dumped into landfill, although it's important to know that, but waste sent to incineration, as well. We needed to have a performance measure for that and a performance measure for assessing the decrease of hazardous and toxic substances in products and packaging.

Speaker, in the end, in a democracy, you can elect as many people as you want or not. But if you're going to hold them to account, you need to be able to measure the actions that they carry out. If a government claims that it has dramatically cut the amount of waste in a society, then we all need to be able to point to or follow indicators that will show whether that statement is true or false.

If we're going to say that we want a reduction in toxic materials, then we need to be able to have a measurement in place that can be tested from time to time, so it can determine whether a government has carried through on its promises or not. It's fundamental to democracy and fundamental to accountability. I'm sorry that we weren't able to get that change put through.

The setting up of an authority: We have difficulty with it. We ultimately were willing to go along with it. It seemed to be where those who are interested in this issue wanted to go, but we, and I believe the official opposition, also wanted to make sure that this authority came under the umbrella of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, under the Ombudsman Act. Because if you're setting up all these authorities that are carrying out public functions but don't have the openness that allows the public to reach in and correct them where things have gone wrong, then you have a problem. You have an unaccountable authority that is allowed to do as much as it wants until something politically impossible or unpalatable comes along.

At a minimum, freedom of information should have applied to this authority. The Ombudsman Act should have applied to this authority so that where people had difficulty, they had recourse for information and for action.

That was an unfortunate loss.

I also want to note that we were able to get an amendment passed on timing, that the minister shall begin developing a policy statement no later than the first anniversary of the day the section comes into force, so

that the policy statement, in the bill as something that has to be part of the process, would actually come forward on a timely basis. Again, as I've said before and other members have said, a lack of timelines in this bill makes it very difficult to say when things will actually happen. They can float off into the never-never without timelines, without boundaries. I think it was a good thing that we were able to get that amendment through.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I can see displays of enthusiasm on the part of some members, which hearten me and urge me to go on further, because there is nothing like encouragement from one's peers to make one feel good about a speech that one is engaged in.

We were also able to get a motion passed that required the minister to consult with municipalities, environmental NGOs, industry and the public on amendments to policy statements—again, part of that process of making sure there was the consultation that is so necessary in a democracy.

We weren't successful in blocking the transfer of enforcement into the hands of this authority, and that is a shame. I've made major points on this—and I see from the odd motions you are making, Speaker, that you may be indicating that the clock has moved on.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you very much. Unfortunately, we don't have time for questions and comments, but there will be an opportunity when this bill comes back to the Ontario Legislature.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## ROYAL ASSENT

### SANCTION ROYALE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to amend the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, to make certain related amendments and to repeal and replace the Quality of Care Information Protection Act, 2004 / Loi visant à modifier la Loi de 2004 sur la protection des renseignements personnels sur la santé, à apporter certaines modifications connexes et à abroger et à remplacer la Loi de 2004 sur la protection des renseignements sur la qualité des soins.

An Act respecting greenhouse gas / Loi concernant les gaz à effet de serre.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you. Since it is now just slightly past 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1804.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miiczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
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<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brook	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
<b>Wong, Soo (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	

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Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri  
Daiene Vernile  
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Steve Clark, Vic Dhillon  
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Chris Ballard, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro  
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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Bill Walker  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Marie-France Lalonde, Gila Martow  
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Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch









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**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Thursday 19 May 2016**

**Jeudi 19 mai 2016**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 19 May 2016

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 19 mai 2016

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WASTE-FREE ONTARIO ACT, 2016 LOI DE 2016 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO SANS DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 18, 2016, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / *Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur la récupération des ressources et l'économie circulaire et la Loi transitoire de 2016 sur le réacheminement des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** When we last debated this issue, the member from Toronto–Danforth had completed his comments. It is now time for questions and comments.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I'm pleased to rise and speak in response to the comments by the member from Toronto–Danforth. First of all, as I said earlier, at public hearings under the Standing Committee on Social Policy in April we heard broad support from a range of stakeholders, including producers, municipalities, service providers and environmental organizations. I would like to thank all of those stakeholders for their input.

I would also like to thank all of the members of this House who have spoken either during the debate or participated in questions and comments for their input and thoughts. I also want to thank all of the committee staff for working it through and all of the staff members in either the minister's office or other offices for their efforts.

I would like to especially thank the member from Huron–Bruce for her insight and input towards further strengthening and improving the bill. She commented yesterday that she liked working with me and I want to share my thoughts with her that I also like working with her. She and I have worked on two bills by now: Great Lakes and the Waste-Free Ontario Act.

But I disagree with her when she said that a new authority would be created. It's very important to remember that under the new model the responsibility will be with the producers. It's very important to have an authority. Previously the responsibility was with funded organizations under the Waste Diversion Act. That was creating a monopoly. It's very important for the smooth transitioning of all the diversion programs that we have an authority.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I was here yesterday when the member from Huron–Bruce spoke for an hour on Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act. We do have other acts that address recycling and that ensure we have as little waste going into landfill as possible. But I really learned a few things yesterday that I haven't forgotten. I've even been thinking about them this morning while walking over here. The blue boxes: Apparently the fact that they're the colour blue is no coincidence. It was a PC government that brought in the program. I had absolutely no idea.

The member who just spoke mentioned a monopoly in the recycling business, as though she's almost agreeing that there are cartels out there that we have to address. We have to ensure that recycling is being done in Ontario for the right reasons, and that it's not a for-profit cartel that is taking advantage. We've heard stories this past year about recycled cans. They get more money in, I believe, Alberta, than they do up in the Yukon, and these intelligent people figure that out very quickly and start shipping aluminum cans from one province to the other. So there's a lot more we can do in Ontario, but also with our sister and brother provinces, to ensure that more recycling is done.

In terms of a waste-free Ontario, well, we're all surrounded by paper here. We're not allowed to read from electronic devices; I want to let people at home know that. If there is prorogation of the Legislature this summer, what a waste that will be, because all the paper we use to speak on all the bills we've already spoken on will be thrown out and we'll have to start all over again. Not my idea of a waste-free Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I, too, had an opportunity to listen, although at a distance, to what my colleague had to say. I think he put the views of the NDP pretty clearly: The NDP supports individual producer responsibility,



which is the goal of the bill, but we have serious issues with the bill.

Speaker, the bill is entitled the Waste-Free Ontario Act, but when you look at the bill it is just a wish for a waste-free Ontario. There is no concrete measure in the bill that brings us to a waste-free Ontario. Well, already I would say the title is rather misleading. Behind the title, what is in the bill is also sort of vague. My colleague certainly went into a whole lot more detail. There are no timelines.

So this bill will go through, it will receive royal assent and the next day nothing will change. We will still have this monopoly. We still won't have individual producer responsibility, and the overall goal of reduce, reuse and recycle that we all want will be no further ahead than before we did all this work. Why, Speaker? Because all of this depends on regulations: regulations that nobody has seen, regulations that may or may not come and regulations that may be helpful or may not be.

My colleague certainly explained some of what could be achieved and what should be achieved to support what Ontarians really believe. We believe in reducing, reusing and recycling, and a government shows its leadership by bringing us there. We have a bill that has a title that is not really what is in the bill, and then we have a bill that has no teeth.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I listened to the member from Toronto–Danforth. As he was going through some of the history of these battles to reduce waste and what to do with waste, I was recollecting my days on Metro council with two people he knows well: Dale Martin and Richard Gilbert. I think Richard Gilbert spent his whole life trying to alert us to the whole issue of what we are doing with our waste and that we have to have a plan. It was extremely challenging work, to say the least.

I also remember another amazing person who did a lot of work on this whole awareness thing, who should go down in history. That's Charles Caccia, who advised Richard Gilbert on this stuff.

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The thing is that this is a battle that has been going on for a long time. It's not going to stop with this bill. It's an ongoing effort that we've got to make to keep on making steps toward reducing our waste and linking this whole activity of reduction to the new economy, because we always forget that these activities of reducing waste and making our local community and our plan more sustainable create a lot of economic opportunity and employment opportunities. We can't forget that. Think of all the people who work in waste reduction now, hundreds of thousands.

The other thing I'll mention again that I mentioned before is, the only fault I find in a lot of the approaches, and partly in this bill, is that we don't talk to the people who don't use blue boxes. There are so many people in our communities who are older, who don't buy canned food, don't buy Kellogg's Corn Flakes. God forbid, they

don't buy pizza in a box. They don't waste. They don't buy waste. So think of those people too and ask them how they do it, rather than just keep buying those pizza boxes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I'm going to turn back to the member from Toronto–Danforth to wrap up.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I want to first thank my colleagues from Mississauga–Brampton South, Thornhill, Nickel Belt and Eglinton–Lawrence for their comments. I was appreciative of the fact that I had the opportunity yesterday to talk about the bill for about an hour. There are two things that I want to comment on in the time remaining to me. The first thing is that, as I tried to emphasize yesterday, I think it's a very substantial mistake to give the powers of enforcement and compliance to this authority. I believe that those powers have to remain in the hands of the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. I think privatization of enforcement is a mistake no matter what realm we're talking about.

We actually don't do well in this province when we've turned over those very substantial powers to stand-alone, quasi-autonomous bodies such as the TSSA. This government doesn't need to actually spin off the compliance and enforcement to this private authority. It shouldn't do it. It's not being compelled in any way, shape or form to do it. It may see it as a cost-cutting exercise, but it is not good for waste management and it's not good for Ontario.

The other thing I want to speak about, Speaker, is the whole necessity of making sure that we end garbage incineration in this province. There is no way that garbage incineration is compatible with a circular economy. It is not compatible with reduction of waste, because garbage-burning operations constantly want more and more waste generated to provide them with fuel. The government had an opportunity to make it explicit in this bill that garbage incineration was not something that would be promoted or supported. It didn't take that opportunity. In fact, the Minister of Energy has a program where Ontario is giving money to garbage incineration companies to generate electricity. These are two major flaws in the government's approach.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate? I recognize the member from Ottawa–Orléans.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Merci, madame la Présidente. I would like to let you know that I'll be sharing my time with the great member from Ottawa South and the member from Kingston and the Islands.

I'm proud to rise this morning and share and speak on Bill 151. I actually last spoke about this bill when it was in second reading, and I'm proud to speak on it again on this third reading. As members of this House may know, I'm a passionate person about protecting the environment. Actually, about two years ago I brought forward a private member's bill, Bill 75, the Microbead Elimination and Monitoring Act. It was introduced so we could protect the environment and our ecosystem.

We need to improve our waste diversion and recycling in this province. Waste creates GHG gases. As we are



looking to reduce the GHG in this province, this act would be another tool in the toolbox to reduce the GHG footprint.

There's also a great need in this province to increase our rate of waste diversion and recycling. Our Blue Box Program, a cornerstone for the recycling movement in the 1980s, has become commonplace in this province. We've been a leader in recycling. I also want to take a moment to applaud my colleague the Chair of Cabinet for what he has done to change the way we look at waste.

As some of you know, other jurisdictions in North America have a patchwork of recycling frameworks, from the sorting of bottles and plastic to paper and organic waste. Other jurisdictions often do not do the same as Ontario.

But that doesn't mean that we should not do more to address the issue. Our residential waste diversion is around 47%, but our industrial, commercial and institutional hovers at a low of 13%.

This legislation and the draft strategy provide numerous tools and opportunities to increase diversion from landfills and incinerators. Increasing diversion is about using the right tools for the type of waste materials. These tools are also helping increase recycling among the commercial, industrial and institutional sectors and can allow the reintegration of materials into our economy.

Waste diversion also gives a boost to the economy. We can create seven jobs for every 1,000 tonnes diverted from landfill. This is a 10-job-creation increase as compared to just sending the waste to a landfill.

The lifespan of many materials sent to landfill often has not been met. We have been sending waste materials off after only one year. This eight million tonnes of waste we cart off represent \$1 billion worth of recoverable materials. By increasing recovery of waste materials that would otherwise be destined for landfill, we harness their economic value.

Madam Speaker, I hope, after all the back and forth between all members of this House, that we will support this bill to protect our environment, create jobs and benefit our economy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** It's with great pleasure that I rise today in the House to once again offer my support for Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act.

Just yesterday we saw Bill 172, the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, pass, and I'm proud to see another bill before the House that will continue the province's effort to fight climate change.

As it stands, our province is generating waste at rates that are unsustainable in the long term. Our landfills are projected to be full in less than 20 years, and more needs to be done to extend the lifespans of existing disposal sites.

In my riding of Kingston and the Islands, I know that the city of Kingston has been doing their best to reach their goal of diverting 60% of waste by 2018. The city has launched campaigns such as #WasteNotYGK that encourage Kingstonians to share their tips and ideas on how to recycle and compost more.

Similarly, scheduled giveaway days of unwanted items help turn one neighbour's trash into another one's treasure, while keeping items out of garbage dumps.

Despite our best efforts, Kingston has continued to struggle to increase the amount of waste diverted every single year. Aiming to be Canada's most sustainable city, Kingston has set an ambitious target of diverting 65% of their waste by 2020.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Very good.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** Not bad.

In order to help reach these targets, however, they require strengthened legislation at a provincial level that will help increase waste diversion and resource recovery on a much wider scale.

Bill 151 helps municipalities such as the city of Kingston to achieve their environmental goals by making producers more accountable for recovering resources and reducing waste associated with their products and packaging.

Producers are best able to control the amount of waste being produced by designing long-lasting, reusable and recyclable products. By making producers fully responsible, this bill also gives them the flexibility of tailoring waste management in a way that works best for their company and is most cost-efficient and effective.

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The proposed legislation will help benefit Ontario households, who will be empowered and encouraged to recycle more because producers will be made responsible for providing customers with clear information about how to manage their end-of-life products and packaging, including information on drop-off sites. Ninety-two per cent of Kingstonians are already using their blue boxes and grey bins. This legislation will only help to ensure that even more is put into the bins.

Madam Speaker, it is also important to note that this bill will not only have tremendous environmental impacts, but it will also have incredible economic benefits for our province. It's estimated that for every 1,000 tonnes of waste diverted in Ontario, seven jobs have been created. Not only that, but studies have shown that Ontario's existing waste diversion programs can create up to 10 times more jobs than waste disposal. If, as a province, we recovered 60% of waste material, we could create almost 13,000 jobs and contribute \$1.5 billion to Ontario's GDP.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to visit the facilities at the Kingston Area Recycling Centre. It was great to see so many employees so focused on waste reduction. I do look forward to seeing the waste diversion in Kingston and the Islands continue to grow.

I have to say that when this bill was originally introduced, I was very, very pleased because I'm a bit of a recycling nut, and I have been focused on recycling for an awfully long time. I heard a story some number of years ago that occurred in either Norway or Sweden—actually, some number of decades ago, truth be told—about the problems that were being experienced in grocery stores, for example, and how much waste was happening in gro-



cery stores. Products were being delivered packaged. A bunch of broccoli had a piece of Styrofoam on the bottom and it was wrapped in cellophane. I think we can all remember times like that when we were seeing products that were very much over-packaged. What the citizens did was they refused to buy that material. There was a bit of an activist movement that happened. They unwrapped the material in the grocery store, left the packaging behind, ensuring that the grocer was obliged to tell the wholesaler they weren't going to buy their products anymore if they continued to have that much packaging. So there's many things that can be done. I think that individual consumers and residents of our ridings are working hard toward it. I think that we're ready for a change in our way of thinking with respect to recycling.

We will continue to work on that. Through legislation such as Bill 151, as well as Bill 172, the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, this government is taking decisive action and proving its commitment to creating a greener, cleaner and more sustainable environment and economy for generations to come. I hope that all members in this House recognize the importance of this bill and will support it.

Merci beaucoup. Meegwetch. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** The member from Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Again, it's good to see you in the chair.

I'd like to begin this morning by thanking the minister for bringing this bill forward and congratulating him on that, and thanking all those in his office, those in the ministry and legislative counsel, who worked very hard on this bill; the stakeholders who came and presented, took their time, sent in submissions; and all the members of the committee. We had over 200 amendments at committee and there was a very collaborative—

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Two hundred and forty.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Two hundred and forty, I've just been reminded by the member from Mississauga—Brampton South. She did great work at committee as well.

It was a collaborative effort. There was a potential to really get bogged down and not get this done. So I'd like to thank everybody for their efforts in that regard.

This is a very important bill that connects with Bill 172. As the member from Kingston and the Islands said, we just passed that yesterday. These two things very much connect together.

I had the opportunity yesterday afternoon—luckily, I was able to get here at about a quarter after 5. I listened to the member from Toronto Danforth—not his full hour but a good portion of that hour—and I could see his passion and deep understanding. He has been following this file for a while, and I'd like to thank him for his support of the bill.

I don't necessarily agree with all of his criticisms. Some of the things that he did raise are of concern to me; I don't think we necessarily had to address those in the bill. I think that the roles of delegated authorities in terms of providing a service to Ontario and ensuring that things

like the Technical Standards and Safety Authority ensure public safety, for instance: I think that they do a good job in that regard. I don't share his misgivings about the delegated authority model for recycling.

I would also like to say a few words about the concern that there's nothing specific in this bill with regard to goals. I want to remind the member from Nickel Belt that these things will be set through regulation, and that regulation can set targets through the minister. It's an effective way of ensuring that we can make those targets, adjust those targets, and respond to the needs and the changing things that are happening in our communities.

I was happy to hear the member from Kingston and the Islands talk a bit about what she had read about what happened in Norway with regard to packaging in stores. My background is in the grocery business. I spent 22 years in the grocery business. We were great recyclers in some ways, especially around the areas of cardboard and deposit return bottles, but not so much on food waste and packaging.

If you look around the world right now—this is actually something that doesn't directly relate to this bill, but I do think it needs to be raised in this Legislature: food waste. Right now, France has taken a very hard stance against wasting food. It is absolutely incredible, the food that's wasted in this world. We have enough to feed everybody, except we just can't seem to get it to everybody. As we move forward, not just in this Legislature but in our communities and in society, we're going to have to address that issue of reducing that waste because there is an issue not only of value and an environmental concern with organic waste, but there is a social injustice with the waste of food.

I have to let you know that when I open up my fridge when I get back to Ottawa and I have to clean it out and I'm throwing out things that are either a leftover or something that we purchased that wasn't fully utilized, I find that very difficult. It's from the perspective of, "That's a waste; that's not right."

I think we've taken that position on other things when we look at this bill in terms of the need for us to reduce the amount of IC&I waste and how much we're putting into landfills. I think those measures are important, and that's what our communities are asking us to do.

I'll go back a bit to what the member from Toronto—Danforth said in terms of the thing that we want most. The thing that we want most is reuse. Recycling is a good thing to do, but it does leave a carbon footprint. It does require more work than simply reusing a bottle. Also, when we reduce packaging we reduce that waste.

The challenge is that what you want to do is incent innovation so that people are looking at those challenges, those problems, that waste that we have, that packaging that we have, and look at it in a way that drives some economic value to the people who are producing that. There's a balance between how you regulate things in government and how you set targets. You don't want to prescribe, because if you prescribe, you run the risk of stifling innovation. It's a delicate balance. That will be the challenge going forward in the regulations.



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On a lighter note, I was really pleased to learn from the member from Thornhill this morning that blue boxes are actually blue because—we can thank the Conservative Party for that. At the time, I resisted time saying it may be an indication that they're good at recycling some old ideas.

Sorry. I just thought I'd share that with you. That dropped like a rock. There we go.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Keep your day job.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Keep my day job, yes. Mum is watching. I'm sorry, Mum. I tried. It just didn't roll out the right way.

I do want to say, in closing, that as with most things in government, as with most initiatives that occur in this Legislature and through government, our work is never done on this. I'm looking forward to this bill and the support of the Legislature for the measures that are in this bill and the regulations through the minister, but even when those are done, we won't be finished.

I believe that we have to address the issue of food waste. I don't think it's just an economic issue or an issue of greenhouse gases in the environment. I think it's a serious social justice issue, and we need to look at that. We need to find a way, collectively, not just as government and as legislators, to make that an issue, as they made that an issue in Norway with the packaging. Consumers demanded that. They took action. In this case, I think it would be very much taking action, not just with businesses in terms of—as they have in France—what their responsibility is toward food waste, but what is our responsibility as individuals, as we consume, as we purchase food, as we, quite frankly, like I do when I get home on weekends, spend time throwing things out of the fridge, which actually causes me great concern. It's not just because I'm parsimonious. It's because throwing out food is just not the right thing to do.

Anyway, I want to thank the members of the Legislature for their support of the bill and their co-operation that we had in committee, and, I think, the genuine commitment that every member in this Legislature has toward ensuring that we do the right thing in terms of advancing the environment as an item of critical importance in this province, not just for us right now, but obviously for our children and our children's children.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I didn't support the bill for a lot of different reasons. But I do support what the member from Ottawa said about food waste. I read the same article in the *Globe and Mail*, and I also read the article about France.

I have a great interest in food because I was fortunate enough to pass a private member's bill that was made part of the Local Food Act, where it gives farmers a 25% tax cut. I noticed in one of the articles I was reading the other day that they talked about that. I know it has had a major impact. I'm waiting till June to get the numbers from the Ontario food banks, if they can show us—I

know what it has done locally in my riding of Sarnia-Lambton. They increased their receipts that they issued to farmers from—I'm going from memory now—33,000 to 53,000. They have what they call a mobile market, where they go out to areas of the city and the county where people don't have transportation to get in town to their regular market. They've added three new locations that they stop at to get fresh fruit and vegetables. They have a number of new donors in the farm and greenhouse community that are also supporting this program.

I just noticed one of the numbers here, a statistic. It said that of the \$31 billion worth of food that Canadians send to landfill every year, 47% is from the home. That would be out of the member from Ottawa's fridge and my fridge, as well. It bothers me, too.

I don't do the shopping at our home. The odd time I get sent out, I always come home with more things than I'm supposed to. I don't get sent very often because I buy things I like. I know that stuff gets thrown out at our house, too. I hope my wife is not watching. It always bothers me. I think, "Why did we buy this stuff in the first place if we're not going to eat it?" So I share—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Thank you.

Questions and comments?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** It is my pleasure to rise on behalf of the people I represent in London West to offer some comments in the wake of the speech from the member for Ottawa South. I have to say, I was delighted to hear that there were 240 amendments introduced to this bill at third reading. That is certainly a welcome departure from many of the other pieces of legislation we have seen come through this House at third reading. I think that this is a great precedent. It's a great model that we should be using going forward.

I know that many of those amendments were because of the tireless advocacy of my colleague, the member for Toronto-Danforth. I have heard, on many occasions, members across the way talk about the leadership that has been shown by the member for Toronto-Danforth on this bill, the Waste-Free Ontario Act, as well as on the cap-and-trade bill and the climate change bill.

I know that his expertise, his knowledge of the environmental sector and also his ability to listen to what people who come before the committee have to say and to capture their feedback and to propose amendments has been very valuable to the government, but also to the people of this province because what we have, in the end, is a bill that more broadly reflects the concerns that Ontarians have.

However, there still is a lot of room to grow. There remain some issues around the lack of timelines with this bill. The cost of blue boxes continues to be a concern for municipalities. This is a good step forward, but—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Thank you.

Questions and comments?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm pleased to be able to say a few words on the Waste-Free Ontario Act. We've got a really interesting opportunity to do some good work here. One of the things that we note is landfill and the fact that so



much goes into landfill that creates greenhouse gas emissions.

Guelph, actually, my hometown, was one of the early adopters in terms of green energy. We have equipment where we capture the methane from the landfill and use it to generate electricity. But that's actually a pretty expensive way in some ways of dealing with greenhouse gases. The better way is not to put the organics into landfill in the first place.

We also in Guelph have a specific organic waste stream. When my garbage goes out in Guelph—and if you live in Guelph, when you move to town, you have to get an instruction manual for your garbage. We have three bins that go out. One of those bins is strictly organics, so it's being separated at the house to get the organics out of the stream that goes to landfill. That's one of the things that we all need to be able to do as we think about the ways in which we handle waste in Ontario so that we, in fact, are having less of an impact on the environment in the long run. I think this bill will be very helpful in getting us there.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I want to just add a few comments to the debate. I also want to talk about it from a slightly different angle, and that is the degree to which this has penetrated the public mind. What I want to use as my example of the lack of penetration, I would argue, is what's out on the roadsides today. As soon as the snow goes, you see all the accumulation of garbage that has been tossed out of presumably moving cars onto the side of the road.

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Many municipalities have quite successful garbage pickup Saturdays and things like that. I always applaud the people who go out and do that as a voluntary activity—certainly I've done it myself—but it's the wrong people who are out there. Where are the people who threw the stuff out of the car? Do they understand about waste diversion? I dare say not, by what I see.

I have a property that is a corner, so I get the pleasure of more garbage because there's more frontage. There is new garbage on the side of the road within a couple of days after you've picked it up. So while the government is engaged in a very complex and potentially successful method, I'm concerned about who is still out there who throws out their paper coffee cups. That's the group that needs to understand.

I have four composters in my garden. I don't have the same problem with refrigerator guilt. I just put it out there and it's going to do more good in the composter.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I'm going to return to the government side. The member from Ottawa South to wrap up.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd like to thank the members from Sarnia and London West, the Minister of Education and the member from York-Simcoe.

I do want to congratulate the member from Sarnia on his private member's bill. I think that was a great private

member's bill. I wish it were mine. I think it's going to do a lot of good and I'm glad that we share that same challenge with fridge and food. Someone passed me a note here. I won't assign it, but it says: "Don't cook so much food." That may be one of the problems.

I don't want to go on about it because I've already gone on about it and I want to say a few more things. I think it's a really serious issue. It does relate to packaging and it does relate to retailers and it does relate to us as individuals.

I thank the member from London West for the words of support. There were 240 amendments. It was a lot of work. There was really a great deal of co-operation. I know the member from York-Simcoe was there as well at—I'm sorry, it was the member from Whitby-Oshawa who was there. It was very co-operative. I think we made the bill better, much better, through that process. Not everybody got everything that they wanted, but I think it's a good bill.

When we work together like that in this Legislature, then we're able to produce something that's truly reflective of what this Legislature means in terms of putting forward legislation that is going to be effective for those goals that we set and for the people that we serve. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Good morning. It's a pleasure to address Bill 151. I recall wanting to speak to this on second reading, but just as I was about to get up and speak, they called for a vote and it went to committee. Here it's back, so I get a chance to finally speak to it.

This is obviously the Liberals' latest attempt to finally institute waste policy that actually realizes promised higher diversion rates following really what is a trail of successive ministers who have in fact failed to do so. So perhaps congratulations. I see the minister is in the House this morning. Good on him for that.

Of course, it's timely. After 12 years, this government is still chasing the 60% waste diversion rate that Leona Dombrowsky promised back in 2004. Twelve years and five environment ministers later they've failed to make more than a dent, with diversion rates stuck at 25%. That's 35% below their target. From Dombrowsky to Broten, Gerretsen, Wilkinson, Bradley and now our current minister, they did a better job of recycling cabinet than they did recycling waste.

What went wrong? Well, what went wrong was that not one of these ministers nor their governments would admit the clear fault in their plan from the very beginning; that is, the more the government gets in the way with excessive programs and agencies, the less likelihood you have to succeed. So we've been stuck with bad programs built on bad policy, which, we've been telling them for much of the past 12 years, simply wasn't going to work. Of course, we're still right.

It was just a few short years ago that I was standing in this House to denounce what was then the Liberal government's answer to waste reduction, Bill 91, the very



hopefully titled Waste Reduction Act. The problem was, as I told government members in this House during debate, despite the title, Bill 91 did absolutely nothing to address the second-largest source of waste here in the province of Ontario. That's right: Instead of actually taking aim at waste, the Liberal plan was to double down on recycling cartels bent on imposing eco taxes here in the province on consumers—eco tax programs that I warned would unfairly increase costs for Ontarians while failing to make any meaningful change in the province's overall diversion rate. I remind you, Speaker, that we're still stuck at 25%.

That's why I took time in this Legislature to champion our party plan that would actually increase waste diversion. It was a plan that recognized the economic potential of the recycling industry. It was a plan that recognized that with the right regulatory system, businesses would invest in recovering old tires, plastics and metals that could be recycled into new products and marketed to consumers across the country and even the world. It was a plan that would unleash the potential of the recycling industry by taking that first initial step of getting government out of the way.

Speaker, it would be rejected by the Liberal government, this plan that would have eliminated each and every Liberal eco tax program. It would have scrapped the Liberals' recycling cartels. It would have abolished the Liberals' eco tax agency Waste Diversion Ontario and returned the government to its true role as a tough regulator. It represented a first step toward a competitive marketplace that would thrive under the right conditions—conditions including setting a measurable and achievable recycling target for businesses, establishment of environmental standards, and enforcement of the rules. The idea was to have businesses themselves hold the responsibility, with a competitive marketplace to find the most effective, efficient and productive way to increase recycling. Waste Diversion Ontario would no longer be telling industry how to run its operations, and actual waste diversion would finally move forward.

While the Liberals were clearly opposed to our approach in 2013, fast-forward to today—and what a difference three years can make. Today, after progressive committee amendments, we now see a Liberal government proposal that has largely borrowed from the PC vision for an open recycling marketplace. And while, as you heard from our current critic in response to the newfound approach, some concerns do still remain with Bill 151, I'm glad to see this government take a couple of pages from our book, recognizing that there truly are no monopolies on a good idea, and borrowing from the effective proposal and PC vision we brought forward just a few short years ago.

I also want to remind folks listening at home that I'll be splitting my time with my colleague from Thornhill—and for those who are here, of course.

To that end, Speaker, I do want to further commend the work of committee members who took time to address a number of our concerns. Specifically, I want to

commend them for addressing concerns relating to timelines to eliminate all those costly Liberal eco tax programs. You see, Speaker, while the legislation introduced at first reading recognized the need to finally deal with these programs that have left us spinning our wheels on stagnant diversion rates, after all these years of experience with this Liberal government, we felt we needed assurances that this same government would actually act to eliminate the many-armed monster they created, of course, under Dalton McGuinty.

I want to thank the committee members for hearing our call on effective, workable guarantees and report-back mechanisms to ensure government's steps to scrap the used tire program, the waste electrical and electronic equipment program, and the Orange Drop program.

**0950**

Thanks to the work of our caucus members at committee, the amended version of Bill 151 now provides specific mechanisms to hold government to the eco wind-down. The authority must include progress updates on the annual report on the phase-out of eco tax programs and the windup of Stewardship Ontario, Ontario Electronic Stewardship and Ontario Tire Stewardship. Second, the minister must report these progress updates to the House every year. Third, clear timelines have been established in law to phase out eco taxes and wind up IFOs once new regulations are in place.

I also want to recognize the government's inclusion of the Competition Act, as I originally called for in my first letter to then-Minister Bradley nearly four years ago. While government failed to recognize my call for the addition of Competition Act reforms in Bill 91 at that time, I'm glad to see that someone was listening and they added it to this current bill, Bill 151.

Thanks to the Liberal reversal, government will no longer be able to create cartels or government-protected monopolies, making each company responsible for recycling adhere to federal competition laws. In the end, we established a fair, free and open recycling market that will work to achieve our goals for higher waste diversion.

Speaker, I would also like to note the committee work to pass amendments allowing for the quick elimination of eco taxes while ensuring a gradual, careful transition of the Blue Box Program.

There is no doubt that the Blue Box Program is the Ontario waste diversion success story, achieving diversion rates of 67% since its introduction by the previous PC government, while recovering paper and packaging so it can be recycled into new products. While the success continues, with 95% of Ontarians able to access curbside recycling, challenges have emerged under the Liberals as disputes over funding and services grow between industry and our municipalities.

Today, after growing calls for answers from all sides, we can support Bill 151's proposed solution to stop cost battle before it escalates to arbitration, an interim solution to settle disputes until the Blue Box Program can be fully transitioned into an industry-led program.

While it has been heartening to see government take the steps we've been calling for on this side of the House,



I'll remind members of some of the steps that remain, steps like ridding this province of the Liberals' eco tax agency, Waste Diversion Ontario, and dropping all the plans to create a force of waste cops to police recycling bins and garbage cans across the province, if you can picture that.

On the first point, Waste Diversion Ontario should be abolished, plain and simple. Instead, have a limited authority to collect data and monitor outcomes. WDO has never achieved its mandate and actually never will. It's unnecessary and, until its elimination, will continue to stand in the way of the waste diversion goals that we all share. To be clear, Bill 151 falls short on this front and continues WDO while giving it massive new powers, including enforcement.

While we're talking enforcement, government has to drop the waste-cop plan entirely. And we're not alone on this one. Even Smokey Thomas, of OPSEU, has issued a press release warning of the government's hiring of private waste cops. Talk about waste. Why would this government have us waste our taxpayer dollars on a force of waste cops to sift through our blue boxes? It's a waste of time, it's a waste of money and effort, and clearly needs to be left at the curb.

So while some concerns remain, I remain hopeful that, as much of the heavy lifting we did a couple of years ago has been reflected in many ways with the new directions we see in Bill 151, we may—Ontario may—now finally be poised to achieve the higher waste diversion targets that successive Liberal governments have paid lip service to and failed to achieve for a dozen years now. After all those years, I think we've waited long enough.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I recognize the member from Thornhill.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm very pleased to rise after my colleague from Kitchener-Conestoga and speak on Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act.

We've had a lot of speakers already on this bill, and everybody is, I would say, on the same page in terms of more can be done and more should be done.

The question obviously comes down to how to go about this. As we've heard, there have been a lot of proposals put forward in the Legislature from all parties in terms of how we can get everybody on board. It does sometimes come down to the carrot and the stick. I'm a firm believer that you do need to carry that stick sometimes, but I prefer to use the carrot and entice people to do what we need them to do, to educate them and raise public awareness.

We heard from the member from—let me see; I have it here. Anyhow, I don't want to say his name. He is from—

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Ottawa South—that's correct—and the member from Mississauga-Brampton South said that there were exactly 240 amendments in committee on this Waste-Free Ontario Act. That's quite a few amendments. You can look at it both ways, Madam Speaker. You can look at it that all three parties really took a good

look, put a lot of thought, met with a lot of stakeholders and took a lot of advice. They wanted to make the bill stronger, wanted the bill to pass and do what it's supposed to do.

You can also say that maybe some people who wrote the bill weren't doing their homework and could have ensured that not that many amendments needed to be there in the first place, because that's quite a few. Unfortunately, the carbon-tax credit bill had over 700 amendments. That, I find a little bit troubling, because I almost feel like maybe we had to go back to the drawing board and say, "We didn't get it right the first time." Amendments, in my opinion, are really to make changes, but not to the actual guts of what you're trying to achieve with a bill. It's just to ensure that everything is being taken care of and that nobody is going to be unfairly disadvantaged by the bill.

I did some research—and I've listened to our critic, the member from Huron-Bruce, who spoke yesterday for almost an hour on this bill. What she said that really surprised me, as I mentioned before in the House, was that the Blue Box Program was a PC initiative. We all know how successful that has been. I've been joking over and over about why the colour blue—and I guess that's not a big surprise, why they would choose the colour blue—and how easily it could have been a red box program if it had been this government who had started it. I'm just kidding. We all like the blue boxes; I'm not looking to change the colour.

We can improve the Blue Box Program in many municipalities. I've wondered for decades why there aren't covers for blue boxes or at least some kind of bungee cord that hooks on. We've heard from the member from Simcoe North about littering that goes on—people throwing cups out of car windows. Yes, unfortunately, that does take place, but too often littering on our streets is just from blue boxes that didn't have covers in many municipalities.

Toronto has the big blue boxes with wheels that the trucks pick up. There are pros and cons to that way of managing the program. In Vaughan, where I live, we have blue boxes that are just boxes, and people put papers on top without thinking to put something a little heavy on top to keep it from blowing around.

We are not able to recycle Styrofoam and many other products. I see the difficulty in putting more items in the blue boxes when we're not able to completely recycle everything we're already taking. That's something I really haven't heard addressed so far: the fact that, yes, we're not collecting enough items. We're only hitting 25%, and the government had a target of more than double that for waste diversion. Unfortunately, too often we're hearing, sometimes substantiated in fact, that the items collected for recycling are not being recycled. Many of them are just sitting in warehouses. Some of them are obviously going to landfills somewhere, and that's extremely unfortunate because people take the time to buy into these programs. They wash their jars and containers out, and wrap their papers and cardboard. But



how are we going to convince people to do a good job with waste diversion if they're hearing rumours, sometimes substantiated in fact, that some of the items they're working so hard and spending so much time and effort to put in the appropriate containers aren't being recycled?

Yes, we know there are a lot of public awareness campaigns that come and go about littering and recycling, but I think that, as a government, we have to first address the fact of all the papers we have here that we're using, that we're still not in the digital age in the Legislature, that we walk out in our hallways and—I'm embarrassed actually to say this for the people listening at home—we have radiators giving off heat that you could fry an egg on in the same room as air conditioners sometimes. That does not sound like an environmentally conscious or aware government building.

1000

Yes, it's expensive to address some of the concerns to ensure that the buildings we live and work in are up to standards in terms of less waste, in terms of recycling, but also less waste in terms of heating, air conditioning, insulation and things like that. We all want to see more being done.

I want to address, in terms of more being done, a woman named Mary Atkinson from Richmond Hill, who sent in a letter to the editor last week in our local paper, the Thornhill Liberal, which is part of Metroland. I'm just going to read it into the House. I don't want to edit it. I didn't get permission to edit it. This is her letter:

"Recycling Adventure Disappointing.

"I live in a condo on Yonge north of 16th Avenue and am president of the board of directors. Our board decided to offer a bulk collection of used compact fluorescent bulbs and lighting tubes in our building, as we thought no one would be willing to drive to the recycling centres with one tube or one light bulb.

"We consulted with our ward councillor, who assured us that we would have no problems in offering this service to our residents.

"On April 2"—so that's not so long ago—"I felt we had collected enough of these hazardous items to make my first trip....

"I drove to the Elgin Mills facility (closest to my condo) where the individuals who met me were very accommodating.

"They took my bin of light bulbs and, after sorting them, explained they only collect the compact fluorescent bulbs (curly ones), no others, leaving me to take back the rest for disposal in landfill/garbage. So far, so good," she says.

"When I mentioned I also had fluorescent tubes, I was told they do not collect these because the disposal process is different; I would have to take them to the Markham or Vaughan regional sites.

"My suggestion: Why doesn't the Elgin Mills facility collect both and when a sufficient number of tubes has been collected, transfer them to the Markham or Vaughan sites?" I'm going to stop there, because it is a long letter.

I just want to say that here's somebody who is taking the time—the president of her condo—to figure out how to encourage people in her building to recycle. She knows that they're not going to bother recycling the bulbs if they have to collect them themselves or bring them themselves. So she develops this little program, and then she's met with roadblocks every step of the way. Eventually, she's told that a condo is a commercial entity and she has to go to the commercial recycling depots, which are even further.

I do want to give credit to the newspaper, because they contacted environmental promotion and protection at the region of York in Newmarket, which responded to her letter and said that they think improvements could be made, but part of the problem, they felt, was some of the staff at the depots weren't aware of the rules and gave her a bit of the runaround.

I want to commend Mary Atkinson for writing in and I want to commend Laura McDowell, the director of the program at York region, for responding.

I also want to commend the Thornhill Liberal newspaper of Metroland for taking the time to send the letter, before they published it, to get a response from the region. Why? Because they want to encourage people. They're worried that if they just publish that letter on its own, people are going to say, "Forget it, I'm not going to those depots. Look, they don't know what they're doing. They're making it too complicated and I don't want to be involved."

Congratulations to all of them for a job well done.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I had the opportunity to weigh in very briefly on this bill when it was at second reading, which seems to be a bit of a theme that we have with the government as of late, when they're using all of their closure motions. Nevertheless, I was able to get in for a couple of minutes.

I was able to talk about some of the great work that our communities are doing to divert items away from their landfills. I specifically talked about the community of Red Lake and their creation of a freecycle shed. I wanted to also build on that and talk about some of the work that all communities are doing with managing recycling. They're doing an excellent job.

In the case of Red Lake, this also comes with a tremendous cost. It comes with a tremendous cost for all municipalities. With Red Lake, they're trucking their materials at least 250 kilometres. That isn't cheap. In fact, cost is an issue that was a main concern to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. As the member for Toronto–Danforth pointed out in his remarks yesterday, these costs are not annoyances. They're not incidental. They are tremendous costs for these communities. New Democrats recognize that municipalities are partners in recycling and they need to be recognized and treated in a way that is respectful of the work that they're doing.

I have to say that I'm proud of the work New Democrats have done to expand the roles of the municipalities



in a formal way. We proposed an amendment to set up a municipal advisory body that would serve as a body comprised of municipal and recycling stakeholders for the government to consult with. But I have to say it's very unfortunate that this amendment was defeated by the government, as there were some changes that would have been very helpful to municipalities.

This bill does still have, I think, a long way to go. I know it is third reading, but I would like to see some of these changes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Just on the issue of municipalities, the estimates from our experts are about \$117 million less cost for municipalities, so this provides some relief. AMO has been very involved with this. We're working together on the implementation, and our municipalities continue to be a priority here.

I do want to address some of the comments by the member for Kitchener—Conestoga. I think that we should all have a little humility here. This bill is very different from Bill 91. When Premier Wynne became elected as our new Premier not that long ago, she said to me, as the environment and climate change minister, "I want you not to be held hostage by previous legislation and actions, and take a new approach to this."

So I looked at private members' bills. I talked to members in this House. Some of the folks in the official opposition have said that they see some of their fingerprints on this, and they have. We listened to the opposition and others and we built a very different kind of bill, with many ideas from Liberal members, Conservative members and New Democrats.

What I mean by "We should all have a little humility" is that the system we're replacing was not of this government. It was created in the last year of the last Conservative administration. I don't say that in a way—because I think that the old system we're replacing was created with some very good ideas. I'm not criticizing the members of the party opposite.

As they tried to implement it and as we tried to implement it, we recognized that the number of IFOs and the system simply didn't work. We worked with it for many years, as the member said, through many Ministers of the Environment. You don't want to dump on every good new idea.

It didn't work. I don't think that we have to kick each other in the head. I think that we've worked on a better solution. Rather than saying, "The Liberals didn't do it right" or "The Conservatives didn't do it right," we tried something that didn't work together and we're fixing it together. We should be proud of that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** It's a pleasure to rise again. Waste diversion is a big issue back in my riding. One of the landfill sites at Petrolia is going to be capped and closed by the end of this year. The more we can do to

have waste diversion will certainly have a big impact in my riding and across Ontario, I know, as well.

We talked a little bit in my comments last time about diverting food waste—not waste food, but good food—from landfill sites. That was part of the thinking behind my private member's bill that I introduced because at the time, I think that in Ontario, they were saying that 24 million pounds of food a year were going to landfill. I thought that was atrocious, when I found out how many people—children, adults and seniors—are going without good, wholesome food. That was the genesis behind that bill and the thinking behind it.

Lo and behold, the Environmental Commissioner of the day—I had never even thought of approaching that individual—did a report and supported that private member's bill, saying it would certainly free up landfill space from food needlessly going there, because there was a need for it. There was another use that that food could be put to. There was an obvious need. There was an opportunity to recycle that food.

There was nothing wrong with the food. Take it from the farmers themselves, and we're working with supermarkets now and the big suppliers to do that. I understand that it's being more of a success all the time.

The Minister of Agriculture and I have talked about this. He and I have talked about getting the numbers from the Ontario food banks sometime in early June and then sharing them with others—how well that program is working, things we can do to make it work even better and maybe complement this waste diversion act by diverting even more food from landfill sites.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I recognize the member from Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** This is the second time that I've spoken for a couple of minutes. I've done 20 minutes on the bill.

I think something we should hit on hard is the fact that this bill—and I want to compliment Peter Tabuns: I know I shouldn't say his name, so I won't say it—from Toronto—Danforth—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** You need to remind yourself to address each other by riding.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I already said it, so I remind myself back. I apologize.

I want to say that the key to this was there were 240 amendments to the bill. I want to credit all three parties, including the member from Toronto—Danforth. They worked extremely hard to put a bill together. I've been in a lot of committees. With no disrespect to anybody, a lot of times the NDP may have good ideas, the Conservatives may have good ideas, but we don't get amendments to some of the bills. I think that's a mistake. I think everybody has lots to offer. They have lots of talent.

In this particular case I want to compliment the minister. I know that you worked closely with our member. I'm sure you worked closely with the PCs, but I don't know how closely. But I think the important thing is that we worked together on a bill. Why would you want to work together on a bill? Take a look at our young



pages, because quite frankly, that's what we're faced with. If we don't fix the environment, our young people, our air, our quality of life, our water are all in jeopardy. That's what this is all about. We have to make sure that we leave an environment where they can breathe the air, that they're not having extra diseases like we're seeing with Lyme disease and things that are happening because of climate change. I want to compliment him on those two issues.

I'd also like to say—I've only got 15 seconds left—the importance of making sure we fix this just for my home riding. If you take a look at the VQA wines, if you take a look at the fruit trees, we really need the weather to stay where it is. If we continue down the road we're going down, temperatures are going to go up three and four degrees. It's going to have a devastating effect on my riding.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I return back to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Just building off the member for Niagara Falls's comments on thanking those involved in terms of all three parties coming together to provide amendments and solutions to strengthening the bill, I know the minister chimed in and talked about a legacy or history lesson on where this all started. He's right. The previous PC government did bring forward ways to divert more waste in the province, but it was never intended to do what, in fact, the Liberals did with it: spin it off into a lot of these IFOs. So now we're correcting what was done.

I do want to step in and thank our critic, the member for Huron–Bruce, Lisa Thompson—of course, significant work, time and dedication on this bill. She also had several other bills in committee. On top of that, it was a very technical bill. Consulting with stakeholders—stakeholders also need to be commended. I can think of the Ontario Waste Management Association, which has put a lot of time and effort into this from day one, and the Retail Council of Canada; AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Food & Consumer Products of Canada.

I will commend the member for Mississauga–Brampton South, who conveyed her cordial relationship with our critic in getting things put together in committee. But we also need to recognize the staff: the staff in the member for Huron–Bruce's office, of course. Shane is a very technical-oriented guy, working weekends to put the amendments together and dealing with legislative counsel, of course. We couldn't have done it without a significant staff effort. Shane, thank you for putting that together. Of course, Jessica, in the member for Huron–Bruce's office, also dedicated significant time. OLIP Alison, I'm sure, chimed in and was able to assist. Congratulations to all. A special thanks to our critic, Lisa Thompson from Huron–Bruce, for bringing forward some critical amendments that were passed to help strengthen this bill.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Seeing it's almost 10:15, I'm going to recess the House until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** In the members' east gallery today I'd like to introduce Mayor Ron Gerow from Township of Havelock Belmont Methuen; Brian Gratton, who is the deputy clerk and economic development officer for Havelock Belmont Methuen; Stuart Harrison, who is the general manager of the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce; and Sandra Dueck, who is the chief adviser to the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce. They're all here today for the sixth annual Peterborough Day, which will occur in rooms 228-230 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., an opportunity to see what the riding of Peterborough has to offer—and Kawartha Dairy.

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** I'm pleased to introduce on behalf of the member from Richmond Hill the family of page captain Alfred Shi: his mother, Jeanne Ye; father, Lionel Shi; grandmother Gui-ying Yan; and grandfather Zi-jin Ye. They will be in the public gallery this morning.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I'd like to welcome, in the east gallery, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond and Bonnie McCool from the great riding of Northumberland–Quinte West.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** My guests are making their way in. We have Edna Hapin, who is a home care PSW; Chrystal Becker, also a home care PSW; Lorna Abraham, a long-term-care PSW; Lisa Jocko, who is in home care; Michael Spitale from SEIU; Brigid Buckingham from SEIU; and Kristof Barocz from SEIU. A great meeting this morning; welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm delighted to welcome, from the fantastic riding of Newmarket–Aurora, Lori Barnes, a constituent, who is also the executive officer of governance and board services at the Toronto District School Board.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have some introductions this morning—bear with me.

On behalf of the member for St. Paul's and page captain Brendan Weeks, I'm pleased to introduce Brendan's mother, Susan Tiam-Fook Weeks, and his grandfather, Henry Tiam-Fook. Ni hao. They are in the public gallery.

On behalf of the member for Mississauga–Erindale, I'm pleased, on behalf of page captain Ayan Siddiqui, to introduce his father, Kamran Siddiqui, who is also in the public gallery this morning. Salam alaikum.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted to introduce my constituents from London North Centre, Richard Lucas and Karen Lucas. They are parents of a great advocate, Brent Lucas, in my riding of London North Centre. Welcome to Queen's Park. We're happy you're here.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'm delighted to welcome members from the OLTCA: Kimberly and Ahmad. Thank you so much for joining us.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I just wanted to introduce Mykola Zakaliuzhny. He is a member of our Ukrainian Canadian community and a journalist, here for the flag-raising at noon on the front lawn.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In the Speaker's gallery today are three guests of mine: a dear friend of mine, Pat Eyzenga, a friend of the MPP, not the MP;



June Taylor; and Sue Howe. Welcome, and glad you're here with us at Queen's Park.

### WEARING OF HISTORICAL COSTUME

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Simcoe—Grey on a point of order.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I believe, Mr. Speaker, you'll find we have unanimous consent that the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington be permitted to wear a period costume to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Perth military settlement. He would like to wear that costume during statements this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've been asked for unanimous consent for the member to wear a period costume for his statement this afternoon. Do we agree? Agreed.

On behalf of all of us, I can't wait.

### VISITOR

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Joining us today in the west members' gallery is Rachel Ewan, who is a PhD student at Sir Wilfrid Laurier. She recently contacted my office and said she wanted to learn more about politics. She's here today watching us, so let's set a great example, guys.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Acting Premier. On May 12, the Minister of the Environment said that "home heating ... is going to have to come from sources other than natural gas." And this week, the member from Beaches—East York said that this is about getting people off fossil fuels and onto electricity.

Mr. Speaker, this government is forcing the people of Ontario to convert from natural gas to electricity for home heating. That will mean that families will have to pay an additional \$3,000 a year to heat their homes.

To the Acting Premier: Does this government really think that Ontario families can afford 3,000 more dollars a year on their already exorbitant bills?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I want to say thank you to the Leader of the Opposition for asking this question, because it gives us an opportunity to very clearly say that we are not forcing homeowners off natural gas—full stop. The question is based on a twisting—they're twisting and torqueing, trying to rile people up. We are not forcing people off natural gas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, again to the Acting Premier: Obviously, the Acting Premier is going to need to explain their new position on natural gas to the Minister of the Environment and to the member for Beaches—East York.

Back to the government's plan to eliminate natural gas, and what it's going to mean for Ontario's small businesses: Jamey Heaton employs 21 people in North Bay. He owns a company, Bavarian Link Meat Products. His electricity costs are more than \$110,000 a year, the second-largest cost after salaries. To keep costs down, he says, they cook mostly with natural gas. He said that if he could reduce hydro costs by 50%, he could expand his business and create new jobs. But not only are hydro rates going to keep Jamey from expanding his business; the plan to eliminate natural gas will kill jobs and put him out of business.

So, Mr. Speaker, the question to the Acting Premier is, Come clean on your plan. Be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham-Kent—Essex, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If you say it again, you'll get a second one.

Deputy Premier.

1040

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, let me try again: We will not be forcing people off natural gas—full stop. In fact, we are expanding access to natural gas. In 2015, we announced \$230 million to expand access to natural gas to rural Ontario. This is great news, and I actually think the Leader of the Opposition—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All of you are not helping me. The member from Leeds—Grenville will come to order. The member from Prince Edward—Hastings will come to order. I've got a good memory.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** That is a good memory.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've also got keen ears. If you say it again, you'll get a second.

Please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to support our expansion of natural gas into communities that do not have the benefit of that—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I think your Minister of the Environment needs to support your plan.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville, second time.

You have one wrap-up sentence.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We will not be forcing people to eliminate natural gas. We will not—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Huron—Bruce, come to order.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, it's almost comical, seeing the Liberal cabinet twist and turn on this position. Maybe the Acting Premier can inform the Minister

of the Environment that his plan is no longer supported by the government. How else can the Acting Premier explain this Liberal natural gas leak? Because according to the Globe and Mail, this government plans on eliminating natural gas.

Mr. Speaker, is the Acting Premier saying the Globe and Mail article was incorrect?

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Oh, they're the bible. Everything in the press is true.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Barrie, come to order.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Because it is very clear that this will cost jobs. It is very clear that this would be disastrous for Ontario. So if the Globe and Mail article is incorrect, I expect the Acting Premier to say that very clearly, because the statements by the Minister of the Environment are in direct contradiction to what the Acting Premier is saying.

Please go on the record and say what plan is accurate: yours, or the Minister of the Environment's.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, let me try this one more time, and I will say this slowly and clearly: We are not forcing anyone off natural gas. In fact, we are expanding access to natural gas. The Leader of the Opposition and his caucus should be celebrating this clarity.

I speak for our entire government—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Who's the chief pretzel-maker over there?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order.

I'm maybe 60 seconds away from going to warnings, and some of you are close enough to get named.

**Interjection:** Wow.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No "wow" about it. We will have order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The opposition party can stop their worrying about this. We will not be forcing anyone off natural gas. In fact, we are expanding access to natural gas.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Deputy Premier. This government would have us believe that there's nothing it can do, or could have done, to mitigate skyrocketing hydro costs. But now we know that's simply not true. More gas plant scandal documents related to the Samsung deal now reveal a very different story. They outline that when Samsung missed their deadlines, the government could have walked away from the multi-billion-dollar deal for nothing. The ministry states the savings would have been about \$30 a year on the average residential bill. Instead, the government did what was

best for the Liberal Party and not for the people of Ontario.

Speaker, my question is, why did the government choose their corporate friends over the interests of Ontario ratepayers?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Our government is indeed committed to renewable energy, and we've built a strong track record, with many successes. The successes, of course—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham-Kent-Essex, second time.

Finish.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, because of the programs that we've instituted, we're creating well-paying manufacturing jobs across the province. In fact, the Minister of Energy was in Tillsonburg a few weeks ago, where he announced a new export agreement with Siemens Canada. We're building wind turbine blades that will be exported to the UK. That's 300 well-paying jobs at that facility and 600 other indirect jobs that are supported by that project.

At the same time, as the opposition has pointed out very clearly this morning, our government has also taken action to reduce overall electricity system costs and has renegotiated the green energy investment agreement, saving \$3.7 billion over the life of the contract—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Back to the deputy: The gas plant scandal documents are clear. It notes that Samsung is "missing multiple milestone deadlines," and this "triggers the province's ability to terminate without penalty, through existing termination clauses."

Speaker, the document further states, "The ministry is now proposing to eliminate much of the existing agreement. The ministry argues that doing so would save the Ontario ratepayers as much as \$5.2 billion."

But instead of taking the ministry's advice and doing right by Ontario's families, they only cancelled, as the minister just said, \$3.7 billion worth. The government left \$1.5 billion on the table. I ask the same question: Why did the government choose their corporate friends over the interests of Ontario's ratepayers?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** In fact, the Ministry of Energy did indeed revise the green energy investment agreement in 2013. The revised agreement includes protecting Samsung's agreement and commitments to jobs and adding a commitment to solar manufacturing jobs in 2016; reducing the agreement's total commitment for renewable projects from 2,500 megawatts to 1,369 megawatts; and requiring Samsung to obtain municipal council support resolutions for renewable energy projects before moving forward.



Samsung has now opened four manufacturing plants across the province, which will create 900 indirect jobs. All of the projects contracted now are online.

The Samsung agreement has resulted in local benefits as well, including Samsung's \$11.5-million program for the benefit of the community of Chatham-Kent, and Samsung has partnered with Canadian Solar to open a London solar plant.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham-Kent-Essex is warned.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, you can't just blurt it out.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The agreement is ongoing, and the ongoing portion of that agreement is more manufacturing plants and more solar panels supplying the projects, which is solely needed in our province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Back to the deputy: These gas plant scandal documents continue to paint a picture of the inner workings of the Liberal government. They show that the government could have terminated the remainder of the Samsung deal and saved the ratepayers \$5.2 billion and brought relief to hydro bills.

The document went on to say, contrary to what the minister just said, "Ontario has more generation capacity than it requires, and the ministry presents this rationale for not proceeding with future phases."

The bureaucrats knew that walking away was in the best interests of the people of Ontario, but the government only cancelled a part of the deal and left \$1.5 billion on the table. I ask again: Why did this government choose their corporate friends over the interests of Ontario families?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. The deputy House leader, second time.

Minister?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The government is choosing emissions-free technology, emissions-free emissions and more jobs for the people of Ontario. That's what's being created by the ongoing agreement with Samsung. Some 90% emissions-free is now being generated through wind, solar, nuclear, hydroelectricity and bioenergy, and 42,000 more jobs are being created as a result of 30 wind and solar manufacturing operations in our communities.

We are improving overall system costs beyond the renegotiation of the Samsung agreement, which is saving \$3.7 billion over the life of the contract. We mandated annual reviews of feed-in tariff pricing, which will result in ratepayer savings of \$1.9 billion over the life of those contracts. Moving forward on a procurement of future large energy projects, that process is expected to eliminate \$3.3 billion, additional benefits in the system, saving the average Ontario family \$20 annually on their bills, compared to the 2013 long-term projections.

We're benefiting the communities, Mr. Speaker.

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## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la première ministre par intérim.

Yesterday, the deputy leader of the NDP asked the Deputy Premier about the fact that mental health beds across Ontario hospitals are chronically overcrowded. The Deputy Premier, shamefully, refused to even acknowledge this fact or that we had a problem. But according to the facts, hospitals in Ontario are being stretched to 110%, 120% and sometimes 130% of their mental health capacity.

I have a simple question that deserves an answer: Will the Acting Premier admit that it is unsafe to let hospital occupancy get anywhere near 100%, let alone higher than that? Yes or no?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What we absolutely know is that we must continue to expand services in the community outside of hospitals. We must support our hospitals. That's why we increased funding to hospitals in this budget. We are also focusing significant attention and significant funding on building services outside the hospital.

One example that I think resonates with everyone in the House is our commitment to expand palliative care and hospice care in the community. What that means is that people who currently are dying in hospitals can be moved or can be in a hospice, in a community setting where they have a much more dignified experience, as do their families.

That's the kind of health care system we are building: one where people receive the health care that they need, in the best possible place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The Deputy Premier says that health care should be evidence-based; it should be based on facts. Here are some facts that come right from the government itself: In the last quarter alone, the hospital in Burlington was at 118% capacity for its mental health beds; in London, 100%; in Sault Ste. Marie, 100%; in St. Catharines and Ottawa, 100%; in Thunder Bay's hospitals, one was at 103% and the other at 105% capacity.

Will the Deputy Premier look at her own numbers and admit that Ontario's mental health beds are dangerously overcrowded?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I think the difference between the approach that we are taking here and the approach that the third party is taking is that they believe that people are always best served in hospital, whereas we believe—because we recognize challenges—that we need to expand community capacity, and that is exactly what we're doing.

Another way that I'm very proud of the progress that we're making when it comes to people with mental illness is in supportive housing. We know that there are people who are in hospital, in mental health beds, who could be better served outside the hospital, in the com-



munity. That's why we're building capacity outside the community: to take pressure off hospitals and to provide the highest quality of care for those particular people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Well, the Liberals cannot deny the facts. New Democrats obtained, through freedom of information, the government's own numbers. They reveal that acute care beds are overcrowded throughout our province. They reveal that mental health beds are overcrowded throughout our province. Cutting more nurses, cutting more services and cutting more beds is only making things worse, not better. It will make things worse for patients in London, Hamilton, North Bay and right across the GTA.

When will this Liberal government admit there is a silent crisis in our hospitals and stop the cuts to front-line care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, the member opposite—actually, I thought her first two questions were pretty thoughtful. When she moves to allegations that we are cutting health care, that is where she is completely wrong. The numbers speak for themselves. In this budget alone, we've added \$1 billion to health care spending. That is an undeniable fact.

Another fact that I think is really important for people to understand is that we are adding nurses. We have added 26,000 nurses to our health care sector over the past 12 years. That is a significant increase in care for patients, and we're getting outcomes. In fact, ICES, the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Studies, has found that our changes in health care have increased the number of patients being treated and reduced the average length of stay—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma deuxième question est également pour la première ministre par intérim.

Yesterday, I joined my leader, Andrea Horwath, at a hospital in Scarborough. The ER we visited was built for 20,000 people per year, but it's handling 65,000 people. For half of last year, Rouge Valley's Scarborough Hospital was running at over 100% capacity. Health care in Scarborough is stretched really thin, Speaker.

Will the Liberal government agree that, at the very minimum, hospital funding should keep up with inflation and the growing population each and every year?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, what's really important to me are the outcomes for patients, because that is what our whole health care system is all about.

The SEIU—I know there are some people from SEIU here today, and welcome to the Legislature—did a study on the Canadian health care system in 2014. The conclusion they came to was this: When it comes to spending our health care dollars wisely and efficiently, Ontario and Quebec are at the front of the pack.

The Fraser Institute's report on wait times revealed that Ontario has the second-shortest overall wait times in Canada. In fact, we've gone from the worst to the best when it comes to hip and knee replacements, cataracts, cardiac care, radiation oncology, MRIs, CT scans and ultrasounds.

What matters to me is that patients are getting the care they need more quickly, with a higher level of quality. As I've said before, the system is in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Well, yesterday, we met their cardiologist. He told us that the lack of funding for their cardiac catheterization lab at Centenary hospital means that patients cannot get the preventative cardiac care that they need. Because they don't get the preventative care, they end up needing more invasive, more high-risk surgeries down the road.

Will the Acting Premier stop the cuts to our hospitals, so that patients can get the access they need and the hospital care they need?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's interesting, I guess, that we'll be talking a lot about Scarborough over the next little while. But I do want to say that our members from Scarborough and west Durham have been very strong advocates for the health care system. Like me, they are committed to a health care system that puts patients first.

We are increasing our investment in health care every single year. We have done that. They are making claims that simply are not true about cuts to our system. The reality is that hospital funding has increased by 53% since 2003. We are increasing funding for every single hospital in the province of Ontario this year as part of our \$1-billion increase to health care spending.

We are increasing funding in Scarborough: \$4.5 million for the Rouge Valley Health System; \$2.9 million in Scarborough; \$2.6 million at Lakeridge. We're making—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Hospitals throughout the GTA are overcrowded. Centenary hospital in Scarborough is only one of so many examples. The ER sees three times more patients than it was built for. More often than not, there are no acute care beds available to admit anybody from the ER. Doctors feel the system is stretched beyond the limit.

This is a health care system in crisis. When will the Deputy Premier admit that there is a crisis in health care and stop the cuts to our hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Once again, there are facts here that are actually indisputable. There are no cuts to hospitals. There is, in fact, a significant increase to hospital funding this year, and we have increased funding in the past as well.

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We are getting outcomes for patients that are demonstrating that people who work in our health care system are working very, very hard to provide better quality of



care. We're seeing infection rates coming down in our hospitals. We're seeing higher quality of care in our hospitals. The impact of the Excellent Care for All Act is actually visible now as hospitals report improvements in quality of care. That's what patients are looking for. They want access to care in a timely way, and when they get that care, they want it to be of the highest possible quality.

#### TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Yesterday's Auditor General's report was quite stunning on the secret union payouts. The auditor said, "Ontario is an outlier with respect to this use of taxpayer funds." We also found out in this report that there is no evidence of the Ontario government—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The deputy House leader—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Do you want to go?

The deputy House leader is warned.

Finish, please.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** We also found out that there's no evidence the Ontario government has paid any other public sector union for bargaining costs in Ontario. So just a quick recap: An outlier in Canada, no other bargaining costs were covered in any other sector, and it adds up as well as your net zeros do in Treasury Board.

My question is, are the Liberals ashamed that they took the money from the classroom? Because not only is this not done in any other sector in Ontario; it's a one-of-a-kind deal in the rest of Canada.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Despite attempts to be the new PC Party, this is a really solid reminder that the old PC Party still rules. Attacks on teachers is what they do best.

We completely disagree with them. We actually believe that investing in teachers and investing in professional development has a positive impact on kids in the classroom. We're proud of our investments in professional development—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward-Hastings will withdraw.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Withdraw.

**Interjection:** From his seat.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I know my rules.

To your seat, please, to withdraw.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Look, bring it down a notch.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** My question: Does the member opposite really believe that teachers should not—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds-Grenville is warned.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Does the member opposite believe that teachers should not be trained in things like bullying prevention, in how to work with kids with special needs, in how to teach mathematics in a way that improves those math scores? Training teachers is an important part of having a strong education system.

The results speak for themselves. When they were in charge, the graduation rate in high school was a shameful 68%. It is now over—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I can tell you one thing: Bill Davis would never have taken \$80 million out of kids in classrooms. And I can tell you another thing: Bill Davis never would have stood up and said a 50%, one way or the other way, was a net zero. No, Bill Davis never would have done that. In fact, he would have ensured that there were—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Please finish.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'll tell you something else Bill Davis never would have done: He would never have threatened kids in demonstration schools for the deaf and the blind. He never would have cut them off of IBI and ABA wait-lists. He wouldn't have ensured that rural schools and urban schools across this province were going to be cut. No, no. The party of Bill Davis would never have done that, but the party of Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty sure as heck did.

So I ask the Deputy Premier one more time: What could that \$90 million have been spent on? Kids in classrooms or more transfers to unions?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I knew Bill Davis, Lisa. You're no Bill Davis.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation, second time.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now we'll move to warnings. I'll give them out like candy if you want.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Yes, quite frankly, and for the ones who have been warned, the next one is a naming.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think it's actually time to reflect on how Ontario's teacher unions were originally set up. They were set up as federations that didn't bargain under the Labour Relations Act. They were set up with the capacity to—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We don't need a history lesson; we need to know—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** They were set up with bargaining departments and with a professional development department. Do you know who set them up that way? Premier Bill Davis set them up that way, so don't tell me that Bill Davis didn't believe in professional development for teachers. We actually—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Minister, when I stand, you sit.

New question.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Last year, the government changed the Government Advertising Act so that they could run partisan government ads. We see them all the time.

As Ontario's non-partisan Auditor General wrote, "The government could flood the province with self-congratulatory and self-promotional advertising that would be of little practical use to the citizens paying for it." The new electoral rules will limit anyone who wants to criticize them during an election and the six months before, but they will allow the government to spend millions and flood the province with partisan ads during an election and the six months before. Those are the rules.

Are the Liberals so desperate that they'll limit the speech of non-partisan citizen groups in the province of Ontario?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** How about that \$10,000 fundraiser you're having?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton–Lawrence is warned.

Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We're very proud of the legislation that we have when it comes to banning partisan government—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry is warned. I'm just going to do what I said.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** One of the first things we did when we were elected in 2003, Speaker, was to bring in legislation to ban partisan ads because we had seen such a blatant misuse of taxpayers' money from the previous government. We're proud of that. We're one of the very few jurisdictions in the whole world—

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Baloney. You rigged the election.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek is warned.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We're one of the few jurisdictions in the entire world to have legislation that bans partisan ads and we're proud of that distinction.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The Liberals' new rules don't just limit third-party ads about political parties or politicians. These new rules clamp down on any issue of public interest. The new rules will silence climate change groups, non-partisan citizen groups, parents concerned with autism, people fighting for pensions or fighting for lower hydro bills, nurses concerned about the cuts in the health care system—all will have their right to free speech limited at the same time as the government can flood the airwaves and bus shelters and newspaper ad pages with partisan government advertising.

Can the Deputy Premier explain why there is one set of rules for seniors fighting for pensions and another set of rules for the Ontario Liberal Party?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** It is clearly obvious, now, that the NDP do not want to reform election financing rules in the province of Ontario. From the beginning, they have been trying to slow down and stall the process. Perhaps they want to justify and continue to do their big \$10,000 fundraisers like the one they're going to be doing in Ottawa.

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On this side of the House, we have heard the public. We want to make sure that we have a system that is transparent and accountable. That is why we have tabled this bill and we want to go and listen to Ontarians. I hope that the members opposite on the NDP side will agree to a unanimous consent motion so that we can start that public hearings process now, so we can start listening to Ontarians now and through the summer.

I ask the NDP: Are they going to support the unanimous consent motion or not?

### GOVERNMENT FISCAL POLICIES

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** This question is for the Minister of Finance. Minister, Ontario's Financial Accountability Officer released his Economic and Fiscal Outlook for Ontario. The report forecasts solid growth for the Ontario economy and confirmed the province's budget projection that Ontario can achieve its long-standing commitment to balance the provincial budget in 2017-18.

This balanced budget was first forecast at the bottom of the recession in the budget of 2009-10. Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada never to miss a deficit reduction target and to balance according to the schedule set during the recession.

Speaker, would the minister tell the House how the province's stewardship of its finances brought Ontario through the recession and pointed it back into the black?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you to the member from Newmarket–Aurora for that excellent question. I would also like to thank the FAO and take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the work he's done on his report.

Over the past two years, the Ontario economy has posted solid growth, with real GDP rising by 2.7% on average in 2014-15. Our commitment to build Ontario up



ensures stronger growth going forward. In fact, the FAO expects that Ontario's economy will outperform the rest of Canada in 2016 and continue to grow over the next several years, supported by strong gains in international exports and business investment. Equally important is that our progressive fiscal plan is positioned for improving long-term economic sustainability.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Thank you, Minister. The report from the Financial Accountability Officer has validated the process the province took to getting back to a balanced budget after this fiscal year. Whether bonding agencies, economists, banks or others, external reviewers have also noted the credibility of Ontario's 2016 budget and fiscal plan.

Anyone can slash and burn their way back to balance, putting the burden on the backs of those least able to afford it. Ontario grew targeted business sectors and steered a compassionate and responsible path back to balance during the past eight budget cycles.

Would the minister outline the key components of the province's budget that enabled Ontario to balance its budget, emerge stronger after the recession and lead Canada in economic growth?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** A very well-informed question. Let me be clear: We're on track and on schedule to balance the budget by 2017-18 and the year after that. We're making strategic investments in infrastructure and in services that matter most to the people of Ontario.

To mention only a few, we're investing \$1 billion more in health care, \$400 million more to the Business Growth Initiative and \$160 billion over the next 12 years to build roads, bridges, transit and needed infrastructure. The government is committed to beating our targets and coming to balance through a fair and balanced approach, as we have been over the last number of years.

Thank you for the question and thank you to the team on this side of the House that fights for Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

New question.

## HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Yesterday, the Financial Accountability Officer confirmed that under this government's economic plan, they're not going to be able to fund the natural inflationary growth of health care spending. This means more nurses will be fired, more surgeries will be cancelled and further cuts will happen to physician services. All these cuts are due to the government's fiscal mismanagement, scandal and waste.

Will the Acting Premier finally admit that due to their incompetence to govern, health care services for Ontarians will continue to be cut over the next four years?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I've said earlier today and the day before and the day before and the day before,

we are actually increasing spending when it comes to health care. It is a billion dollars more this year than last year. I have to say, I don't know anybody who thinks a billion dollars more is a cut.

We are going to continue to invest more in health care. We're going to continue to make sure our kids get the best possible education. We're going to continue our work to make sure that the most vulnerable in this province have the best opportunities to be successful. We're going to move forward on free tuition in colleges and universities for our low- and moderate-income families. We're going to continue with our agenda and we're going to do it in a fiscally responsible way, in a way that gets better value for the dollars that we're spending.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Back to the Acting Premier. Perhaps the Acting Premier could see where they're sending the money, because it's not reaching the front lines in Ontario. Unfortunately, today it was announced that Sunnybrook hospital was cutting 109 surgery days out of their budget. So cuts are happening, Acting Premier.

Last year, this government not only saw cuts to health care; they fired nurses, they cancelled surgeries and they cut physicians' services. Yesterday the FAO report brought to light the degree of underfunding the health care system is receiving under this government for the next few years.

Not only do hospitals have to deal with budget shortfalls, but they also have to deal with the decreased revenues from the Ontario lottery corporation that this government has cut. They have to deal with the high energy rates that are affecting the hospitals. The hospital in Timmins is concerned that the money they received in extras is not even going to cover the cost of their electricity bills.

Will the Acting Premier tell Ontarians how many surgeries will be cancelled and how many nurses will be fired this year due to their underfunding of health care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm sorry to hear that the member opposite has fallen into the trap of not understanding that when we talk about nurses, we need to talk about net new nurses. Collective agreements are written in a way that layoff notices are issued even if those nurses are re-hired in another part of the hospital. So when you talk about net new nurses—26,000 net new nurses in our system now—even last year, thousands of net new nurses were added.

I do find it strange that the member opposite who asked that question is the same person who stood in the way of us cutting the price of generic drugs in half for all Ontarians. That action was one example of how we can get better value for money. That caucus and that member in particular did not want to cut the price of drugs in half.

We're going to continue to do the work we need to do to get best value and best outcomes for patients.

## PARENTAL RIGHTS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Last year's Cy and Ruby's Act for parental equality



passed second reading with all-party support. Since then, the government has stalled on my bill and there are babies being born to LGBTQ parents who are being forced to fight Ontario's discriminatory system.

For a decade now, the courts have told the Ontario government that our parentage legislation is clearly discriminatory. It does not recognize that LGBTQ families even exist. As a result, LGBTQ parents are forced to adopt their very own children.

Can the Acting Premier please explain why this government won't pass Cy and Ruby's Act and is continuing to prevent the children of LGBTQ parents from parental recognition?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I want to thank the member from Parkdale—High Park for her advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, this government remains committed to supporting all of Ontario's families and protecting the best interests of children. We recognize that modern families come in many diverse forms. We are also aware that use of assisted conception methods, such as IVF and surrogacy, are increasingly common. I spent 14 years in the delivery room, and this was not the reality of the time—I realize that was many years ago.

But before any changes are made to parentage laws, it is important to hear from as many people as possible about their experiences, to ensure that we understand the needs and circumstances of all families.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Back to the Acting Premier: This government's inaction on this issue has forced LGBTQ parents to take the government to court. You're fighting them in court. The government apparently cannot figure out whether it is going to concede that legislation needs to be changed or whether it will continue to fight equality for LGBTQ families.

This isn't complex. The government should not be fighting this case. It's a waste of taxpayers' money and time. Will the Acting Premier commit to ending the discrimination of LGBTQ parents and children and pass Cy and Ruby's Act on parental equality in time for pride month, yes or no?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Attorney General?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** We support the principle underlying the member opposite's bill. That's why the Ministry of the Attorney General, in co-operation with other ministries, will be consulting on this important issue over the coming months. Ontario was served with a constitutional challenge to the birth registration and parental recognition provision in the Vital Statistics Act and Children's Law Reform Act. As this case is before the court, I cannot comment on it, but I can tell you that we're serious about consulting because there are different opinions and we wanted to make sure that we hear from as many families as possible.

## PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. May 19 marks Personal Support Worker Day, a day for us to celebrate the contributions of the approximately 100,000 personal support workers here in Ontario. I acknowledge those that are with us here today. I've worked closely with many PSWs in my community of Cambridge and the Waterloo region at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, and also in my role as a care coordinator for the community care access centre.

More importantly, there are many families in my community who rely on and value the important services that PSWs provide to them daily. In fact, in the home and community care sector alone, nearly 41 million direct hours of publicly funded personal support services are delivered each year.

Can the associate minister please speak to the role that PSWs play in Ontario and the steps that our government is taking to support them as they serve Ontarians?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I want to begin by thanking the member opposite for the question. I know that, as somebody who has worked in the front lines, she understands the important role that PSWs play. I want to also take the opportunity to recognize some of the PSW workers and SEIU union representatives who are here today.

I want to take this opportunity on this day to recognize, officially, the contributions of personal support workers in Ontario and assure the House that our government is committed to building a high-quality PSW workforce with the capacity to meet Ontario's personal support needs today and for many years to come. We as a government have been a leader in recognizing the growing importance of PSWs in the health system. This includes our PSW workforce stabilization strategy, which will see the base minimum wage for publicly funded personal support services in the home and community care sector raised to \$16.50 an hour.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you to the associate minister for her work on this file. Our government's steps toward supporting our PSWs contribute fundamentally to our plan to put patients first across Ontario. During my time as a care coordinator, I often worked together very closely with PSWs to help manage and improve the health of our shared patients. More than 34,000 of Ontario's 100,000 PSWs deliver care, assistance and support to our seniors and other people with complex care needs in their homes and communities. We estimate that over 9,000 PSWs work in hospitals and 57,000 PSWs work in long-term-care homes.

To continue building up these services, it's essential that we work with our partners in the sector to develop a long-term strategy. Can the associate minister please inform the House what work is under way to strengthen our government's relationships with PSWs?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you to the member from Cambridge for the supplementary question.



Our government has ongoing plans to work with the sector so that our personal support workers can continue to provide better service for Ontarians. That is why we have developed a common PSW educational standard, which was released in September 2014, to improve the consistency of learning outcomes. We have also created the PSW training fund, which provides up to \$10 million annually to support training and education to PSWs working in home and community care.

We are committed to a long-term strategy that will serve our PSWs and will build on our initiatives to strengthen the profession and ensure ongoing alignment with the health system transformation agenda.

Finally, I just want to thank the PSWs across this province because they are the glue that holds our health care system together.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, as you know, in your hometown of Mississauga they recently voted to ban Uber and ride-sharing operations altogether. I want to commend Mayor John Tory and members of council. They brought forward some sensible resolutions that are balanced in protecting consumers while enabling more choice in Toronto.

The reality is that now we have Ontario's largest city next to Ontario's third-largest city—and Brampton may join Mississauga—where you can get into a legal Uber vehicle on one side of the street and then, preposterously, cross the street and be in an illegal Uber vehicle.

Minister, this is not good for consumers. It's not good for drivers. It's certainly not good for business investment. Don't you think it's time that we brought in province-wide rules around ride-sharing for clarity, for consumer protection and to allow good choices for consumers in our province?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you to the member for his question. Thank you also for corresponding with me last week relative to this very issue, recognizing that the sharing economy is upon us. I outlined that very clearly in the fall economic statement as well as in our last budget, that we must embrace the issues around the sharing economy in a way that is fair, provides consumer protection and provides business protection.

That is exactly how we're proceeding. We've established a consulting committee to review the effects and the impacts going forward. We also recognize the importance of the municipalities in engaging in the licensing. Some municipalities have operated differently than others when it comes to the sharing economy, and with ride-sharing specifically.

I recognize the challenges that are before us, and I appreciate the member's commitment to the issues and engagement that we have ongoing as a result.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Minister: I appreciate the fact that he has, as finance minister, helped move for-

ward insurance products for ride-sharing. I commend him and encourage him in that endeavour.

As the minister knows, in Mississauga, there are over 100,000 users of Uber. There are 5,000 people on payroll who depend on that income, and they had a bizarre system where they had an advisory committee that was dominated by interests from the cab sector. Asking Uber to get their permission is a bit like asking Netflix to get permission from Rogers and Bell and Cogeco. It just is not going to happen. It's very much last century.

You may recall that the city of Mississauga sent you a resolution asking for the province to intervene and have province-wide standards. I think that's a cry for help. It's certainly a good change that would benefit consumers across our province.

Minister, will you take the advice from that resolution and bring in standards across our province to help move this decision into the 21st century and out of the last?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Yes, the member opposite did highlight the conditions of that advisory committee that he felt was sort of tilted one way. I understand that issue. We have also established our own sharing economy advisory committee to develop an integrated and a coordinated strategy that will promote a level playing field and tax fairness that fosters innovation and support for new business. We don't want to hamper economic ingenuity and increasing of economic prowess, and we want to protect workers, consumers and communities.

The member opposite cited the fact we have before us a review for insurance protection of all those who would be safe in those respective vehicles. We are doing just that by the redefinition of "fleet" to enable, in this case, Uber and Intact to have an agreement to provide for safety for consumers as well as the drivers. We also have Aviva, which has done another program to support drivers so that they're properly insured.

I have been reviewing what has happened in Alberta, recognizing some—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

1130

### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** My question is to the Acting Premier. The Fort Erie Race Track will open for its 119th season on May 31, and you're all invited to join me there.

This racetrack remains the only one in the province that must rely on \$250,000 in funding, from the town of Fort Erie. There are 29 gaming zones in the province, including Niagara, but Fort Erie is excluded. The racetrack has a business case to become self-sufficient. It supports a thousand good-paying jobs in my riding—700 direct and 300 indirect jobs. It's an important part of the fabric that makes Fort Erie such a great community.

The town supports the track, visitors support the track and everyone in Niagara supports the track. Will this government support the Fort Erie Race Track by includ-



ing them in the Niagara gaming zone and returning slots and increasing race days at our track?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to just commend the member for Niagara Falls. I know what kind of interest he has in the horse racing industry in the Fort Erie area.

We do know that the Fort Erie Race Track, of course, is the second leg of the very prestigious Canadian Triple Crown, the Prince of Wales Stakes.

During our recent budget, my colleague the Minister of Finance extended the funding for horse racing in the province of Ontario from 2019 to 2021, to provide stability to what is a very important industry, particularly in rural Ontario. We have 940 race dates in the province of Ontario—the fourth in terms of jurisdiction in North America—and we'll continue to look at plans for Fort Erie as we move forward with the integration with the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. in the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Back to the Acting Premier: The government claims that their latest horse racing plan will restore confidence to the industry, confidence that was lost after the government's last horse racing plan failed.

We have an incredible amount of development ready to go in Fort Erie, like the Canadian Motor Speedway, and fixing the track is the final piece we need, to make sure all that development goes forward.

Will this government give confidence to the people of Fort Erie, and the horse people across the province, by including Fort Erie in the Niagara gaming zone, returning the slots to Fort Erie, protecting the thousands of jobs there, and ensuring the Fort Erie Race Track can be self-sufficient?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Be seated, please.

Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I thank the member for the question, recognizing the importance of the work that has been done recently to pass legislation to establish an Ontario racing coalition that represents the entire industry, to facilitate us with the respective funding of \$100 million that is now committed to the industry.

When it comes to trust, it's all about ensuring trust, to ensure that the monies that are being established go where they need to go, which is to the horses, to the breeders and to the people in the rural communities that will benefit, who have not actually benefited to date.

We are making those changes. We are working very closely with the industry, under the industry's co-operation and collaboration.

I'm very proud of the work done by the Minister of Agriculture to this point. We'll continue to work closely, for the benefit of the horse racing community, on an ongoing basis.

## SENIOR CITIZENS

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** My question is for the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. I know first-hand that in my riding of Davenport, I am fortunate to have the number of seniors that I do. My question today is on social integration and the participation of older adults in our society. The participation of seniors in the community is often seen as an indicator of a productive and healthy society, and it is widely accepted that social supports have a strong, proactive effect on health.

However, the opposite is also true: Many seniors may be at risk of being socially isolated or lonely. This may be due to a number of factors, such as living alone, death of family members or friends, retirement or poor health.

We know that seniors want to live longer at home and in the community. Thus, the issue of social isolation takes on a new importance, a significant issue today across the province.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister inform the House of the work being done by his ministry to address social isolation among seniors?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** I know that the member from Davenport is a very avid supporter of seniors in her community, and I want to thank her for the question.

Our government, led by our Premier, is dedicated to assisting seniors in living a comfortable, healthy and safe life after retirement. Sustaining healthy lifestyles, providing information, increasing knowledge and providing plans and programs are at the core of our Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors, like the 263 Elderly Persons Centres—to the tune of \$11.5 million in support for centres that are provided in every corner of our province, delivering healthy and active aging and wellness in the community, as well as the seniors' community affairs and the 56 friendly communities, with \$1.5 million in support.

Speaker, the reason this community—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I would like to thank the minister for his response, and our Premier for the dedication to seniors in Davenport and across Ontario. I'm very pleased to hear of the many initiatives our government is doing and I look forward to seeing many seniors in Davenport and across this province benefit from these many programs.

I'm especially pleased to learn that we have programs in place to encourage seniors to stay active in their retirement years, and I know many of these services are provided by the many wonderful organizations in my riding of Davenport.

Given the potential harmful effects of social isolation and loneliness, especially in seniors, it is important to continue to pursue this issue in order to reduce emotional damage to seniors that may result. Would the minister please inform the House more about the status of the Seniors Community Grant Program?



**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Again, I want to thank the member for Davenport.

Yes, the Seniors Community Grant Program is the first grant in the province of Ontario dedicated solely for the benefit of seniors. It is intended to give seniors more opportunity to participate in their communities, and encourage greater social inclusion, volunteerism and community engagement for seniors. The grant grows from \$500 to \$8,000 depending on their stream, and it's aimed at supporting not-for-profit organizations.

Under the leadership of our Premier, the Seniors Community Grant Program has already supported some 544 projects and helped about 116,000 seniors in our province. I have to say that the program is now a permanent program and we'll continue to increase the funding as well.

I have to put in a little bit of a plug for the hard-working staff at the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not right now. New question.

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** My question is for the environment minister. Speaker, over the last couple of weeks, the minister has flipped and flopped like a fish out of water. Just last week, the minister suggested in question period that he would cut off natural gas to Ontario cities. And then, when he was called out, he backtracked. It's on tape. Then, when the *Globe and Mail* revealed the Liberals do, in fact, have a blueprint to remove natural gas heating from homes in Ontario, they backtracked.

The ministry is now claiming this isn't the government's plan despite outlining his intentions to cut it off last week. Speaker, is the minister suggesting last week he put his foot in his mouth once again or is he suggesting the document obtained by the *Globe* contains no plan to phase out the residential use of natural gas by 2030?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I've been very clear: (1) We are not forcing people off natural gas. Let me say it twice: We are not forcing people off natural gas. Let me say it a third time, Mr. Speaker: We are not forcing people off natural gas.

(2) We are working with natural gas companies and many others on extending services on cogen. There is a great deal of enthusiasm for low-carbon solutions for homes. We will enable that and we will support the choices Ontarians make.

The member opposite has a plan that would cost households \$107 a month, Mr. Speaker. That's what it would cost to de-link. That's what the carbon tax—\$107 a month. The Tories want to bankrupt Ontarians.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader on a—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's never too late—never too late.

The government House leader on a point of order.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the scheduling of Bill 201, the Election Finances Act, at committee for the purpose of public hearings during the summer months.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? I heard a no.

### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I do have a very important note to make for all of us—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** —for all of us. It's the last day for the pages.

I would like to offer our pages our gratitude for the wonderful work that they've done.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You see? We can be nice together for people, so that you go home happy.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1141 to 1300.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to welcome to the members' gallery Rena Silver, who is president of Hasbara at York University; Willem Hart, who's also involved with Hasbara at York University, but he's here with StandWithUs Canada, and he's an Emerson fellow; Kinsey Schurm, who is chairman of the "Vote No to BDS" referendum campaign at the University of Waterloo and is very involved with the PC Party youth; and Judy Jo and Zehavi Zynoberg, Jewish and pro-Israel student organizers at York University.

I just want to mention that Alan Krolik is supposed to be on his way, as well.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I'll be making a statement on this as well: I want to introduce the Singh Khalsa Sewa Club. These gentlemen and a few of their friends took two full truckloads of supplies to Fort McMurray. They drove straight there for 30 hours.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I just wanted to introduce some very special guests who are with us today at the Ontario Legislature. First of all, I'd like to welcome Mustafa Dzhemilev. He is a member of Parliament in the Parliament of Ukraine and the recognized leader of the Crimean Tatar people. Welcome, Mr. Dzhemilev, to Queen's Park.

I'd also like to welcome further guests. We have with us Liudmyla Davydovych, who is the consul general of Ukraine here in Toronto. We have Sviatoslav Kavetskyi, who is also with the Ukrainian consulate. We have Gökhan Toy, who is the vice-consul of the Republic of Turkey. We have Rustem Irsay, who is the president of

the Canadian Association of Crimean Tatars. We have Sergii Usyk, who is Mr. Mustafa Dzhemilev's assistant. We have Anton Sestrityn, who is also with the Canadian Association of Crimean Tatars, and Vlad Paslavskyi, who is a leader in our Ukrainian Canadian community. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? Last call for further introductions.

Therefore, it's time to model our new uniform of MPPs—I'm sorry. Now it's time for members' statements.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### PERTH MILITARY SETTLEMENT

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Perth, like its Scottish namesake, stands

'Mid spreading fields, and fertile lands,

Upon the river Tay.

Dense forests once, and swamps were seen,

Whose autumn tints and gorgeous green

Combin'd in rich array,

Where now "The Model Town" is found,

With happiness and honour crown'd

Improving every day.

Speaker, it is with great pleasure and fanfare that I beg to inform this House of important news. I have heard reports that a company of Royal Engineers will arrive in Perth on the morrow. This company of royal engineers embarked 200 years ago to build a military establishment in the wilderness of Canada West. Their sons, daughters, ancestors, friends and family are all encouraged to greet them tomorrow as we begin a year-long festive celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Perth Military Settlement.

It was also 200 years ago that this assembly, in its enduring wisdom, recognized that there was a need to create a legislative library whose purpose would be to serve as an archive for the province, which would include the many deeds, adventures and heroism of the colonial families to the Perth Military Settlement.

Speaker, I'm proud to honour the 200th anniversary of the Perth Military Settlement, and I invite all members of this House to come to Perth, Beckwith, Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley township and celebrate this significant, historic milestone with us.

I will be leaving with every haste, and with Godspeed and Providence I will rendezvous with the company at Rideau ferry in the morning and add my paddle to their valiant efforts.

Now, at the close, I wish to say

To all the citizens of Perth,

May you be prosper'd ev'ry day,

And long remain on earth;

Should war arise, or trouble come,

May each and all of us be seen,

Most nobly striving to defend

Our town—our country—and our Queen!

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would entertain unanimous consent to have that as our new uniform if you want.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have to wear one.

### SPRING BEAR HUNT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I rise today to share the comments of outfitters in my riding who are furious with the government's unannounced last-minute changes to the bear hunt. After the ministry announced the reopening of the spring bear hunt to out-of-province visitors, outfitters spent their own hard-earned resources and money to rebuild their business.

Linda and Jim Loiselle from Watershed Bear Outfitters near Gogama write, "Why did the MNRF decide to bring in a quota of non-resident bear hunting permits and wait until three weeks prior to the" bear "hunt opening to announce to outfitters.... ? My non-resident hunters have booked flights and holidays to hunt in my district. This will cause me to lose \$36,000! Appropriate advance notice of changes is only reasonable."

And I agree.

Trevor Spooner of French River Bear Outfitters writes, "Myself, as well as other outfitters, are virtually being put out of business."

Gary Stocking and Kimberly Chappell from Thunderstock Outfitters—again, near Gogama—write, "The MNRF have proven over and over again they do not understand the management concerns of northern Ontario wildlife...."

Speaker, businesses need stability and predictability to be successful. The government's last-minute changes to out-of-province licences is hurting my constituents and ruining small businesses throughout northern Ontario. There is an interim solution on the table. The government needs to act now to save those businesses.

### CRIMEAN TATAR PEOPLE

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** On May 18, 1944, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin forcibly deported 240,000 Crimean Tatars to Central Asia. Over 100,000 of them died. Today we commemorate the victims of this unspeakable crime.

Among those that survived was the legendary Mustafa Dzhemilev, who is with us here today. He spent decades demanding that his people be allowed to return to their homeland. As a result, he spent 18 years in a Soviet gulag. Mr. Dzhemilev is the recognized leader of the Crimean Tatar National Movement and a member of Parliament of Ukraine. I am honoured that he is here with us today in the Legislature as we commemorate the victims of this deportation.

*Remarks in Turkish.*



Welcome, Mustafa, to Queen's Park.

Two years ago, Russia once again invaded Ukraine and invaded the Crimea. History is repeating itself. The Russian regime is once again persecuting the Crimean Tatar people. They have closed their mosques, closed their media and closed their Majlis, which is their Legislature. The Crimean Tatar people are now facing persecution, disappearances and execution. Mr. Dzhemilev's own son has been put in jail and Mr. Dzhemilev is now, once again, banned from returning home. History is repeating itself, Speaker.

Just this week, Crimean Tatar singer Jamala represented Ukraine at the Eurovision song contest. She performed a song about the 1944 deportation. Jamala moved and inspired millions. Jamala won the Eurovision song contest.

I am proud that today, Ontario is the first jurisdiction to my knowledge in the world to officially raise the Crimean Tatar flag in front of its Legislature. We fly the flag here today to commemorate the victims of the 1944 deportation. Let us remember and commemorate them, but let us also take this opportunity to learn history's lessons and redouble our efforts to ensure that the Crimean Tatar people can once again live in freedom in Crimea as part of a free, independent Ukraine. Mr. Dzhemilev, the Crimean Tatar people and the hundreds of thousands of victims of the 1944 deportation deserve no less.

*Remarks in Ukrainian.*

*Remarks in Crimean.*

#### 109TH BATTALION CEF

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** This past weekend marked the 100th anniversary of the 109th Battalion CEF leaving for the battlefields of World War I. Lady Eaton presented colours to the men from Victoria and Haliburton counties—the first time a woman presented battalion colours. The 109th Battalion was raised by local MP Sir Sam Hughes as part of the Buddies and Chums recruitment drive. So many recruits came from small areas around our region to serve King and country.

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I want to honour the men from all the areas, but the north section, the D company platoons, who came from Haliburton, Minden, Gooderham, Harcourt, Highland Grove, Tory Hill and my hometown of Kinmount, where my grandfather was Private Wallace Scott and proudly served overseas, joined the platoons from the south in Victoria county, small towns like Argyle, Woodville, Omeme and Lindsay.

Too often, we think of these events as only about soldiers, battles and casualties. But World War I was a total war on the home front as well, where everyone was part of the effort. Groups raised funds for soldiers' comforts and benefit. They bought victory bonds, planted victory gardens and wrote letters to keep up morale. Women and children replaced men as workers on farms

and in factories, nurses volunteered, and children did fundraisers. Every group contributed in so many ways.

The Great War is one we will always remember, not just because of the self-sacrifice to defend the values of freedom and justice, but because it brought communities together. I thank the Victoria County Historical Society for re-enacting that wave off.

#### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West. As I have stated in this chamber time and time again, Windsor is a proud automotive town, and the industry has always enjoyed tremendous community support.

This month, the community once again came together to celebrate the successes of our automotive industry and discuss how we can continue to foster growth in this very important sector. In fact, community leaders from labour, industry and academia held a policy conference on the automotive industry last Tuesday. People living throughout Windsor were encouraged by the level of co-operation and collaboration shown by all participants at the conference.

Several common issues were raised throughout the meeting. First, the high cost of energy in Ontario is suffocating businesses and is a major barrier to bringing in new automotive investment. Second, we need to start listening to the front-line workers when discussing automotive policy decisions. Finally, we need the government to identify the automotive sector as a strategic asset.

Unfortunately, the government just isn't listening.

The day after the policy forum, consultations were held in Windsor on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a deal that Unifor president Jerry Dias called "outrageous." Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz called the Trans-Pacific Partnership "the worst trade deal ever." The deal will put 20,000 jobs in the auto industry at risk, not to mention the spin-off jobs in the tool and die, automotive parts and technology industries. Even the provincial Minister of Economic Development admitted that he is concerned about the impact of the TPP on the automotive industry.

It's time for this government to tell their federal counterparts that the TPP is a bad deal and to finally prioritize the automotive and related industries.

#### STREETSVILLE BREAD AND HONEY FESTIVAL

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** It officially becomes summer in Mississauga at the start of the annual Streetsville Bread and Honey Festival on the first weekend of June each year. That is the weekend of June 3, 4 and 5 this year.

At the Vic Johnston Community Centre on Church Street, at adjoining Memorial Park and on the main stage, the 44th annual bread and honey festival features rides, local vendors, great entertainment, games, terrific food and, of course, the traditional bread and honey.



Led by our Streetsville Rotarians, many volunteers and groups play host to folks from all across Ontario every year. Our cat Merlin will join me in the annual bread and honey parade down Streetsville's Queen Street on Saturday morning. On Sunday morning is the traditional Streetsville pancake breakfast.

As always, I will be there every minute of both days, much of that time at my booth meeting our local residents and people from all across Ontario to answer questions about Ontario.

It's just \$5 per day to get in and \$2 on Friday evening. People can get more information on the Web at [www.breadandhoney.ca](http://www.breadandhoney.ca), and on Twitter, follow [breadnhoneyfest](#). See you all at Bread and Honey to get summer under way in beautiful Streetsville, Ontario.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I just want to mention that the Jewish community of the greater Toronto area has been watching Kathleen Wynne's trip to Israel this week with many members of the Jewish community and business leaders, as well as one Liberal MPP. We're going to work on our side and plan a trip to Israel from this side, hopefully soon, as well.

I think everybody knows that very soon in the House we are going to be debating Bill 202, the Standing Up Against Anti-Semitism in Ontario Act. It's very sad that in the year 2016 we're still talking about anti-Semitism here in the House.

I'm just going to quickly quote Kathleen Wynne: "I entirely oppose the BDS movement," she said, and "implied that it promotes anti-Semitism." That was just this week in Israel that this statement was given.

Mr. Speaker, we have in the House today some students from York University and elsewhere who have experienced some of the most horrific accounts of anti-Semitism on campus. With some of the students, especially from Hasbara at York, I've heard first-hand tales of name calling, intimidation, marginalization and violence. I'd like to encourage the members of this assembly to talk to these students after this session. You can also hear just how terrible the atmosphere is on some of these campuses. Students have been barricaded in their club rooms. The police have even had to be called.

These students need our support. This debate coming up about BDS is not about free speech. This is about hate speech and intimidation of our students on campus, intimidation of our business leaders and our professors, and intimidation of our brethren in Israel, who I'm sure we all care about deeply.

### JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I'm truly honoured to rise today in recognition of Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario. Ontario is home to approximately 200,000 Jewish Canadians, a community that, since arriving and making Ontario home, has overcome significant barriers and

made significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of our province.

In 2012, the month of May was proclaimed as Jewish Heritage Month, with all-party support, to honour the significant achievements of Jewish Canadians across Ontario. I also want to acknowledge the member from Eglinton-Lawrence and his hard work on Bill 17.

May is an important month for the Jewish community in Ontario, including both Holocaust Remembrance Day and Israeli Independence Day, both of which were marked here at Queen's Park. In proclaiming Jewish Heritage Month, the province of Ontario and our government demonstrated our commitment to celebrating the role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across Ontario, and demonstrated, as well, our shared commitment to a strong and productive relationship with the state of Israel.

While in Israel this week, our Premier and her delegation are leading an important trade mission, meeting with Israeli leaders and innovators to further strengthen the already robust relationship between Ontario and Israel. Our commitment is to continue to work towards educating future generations about the inspirational role that the Jewish community has played in Ontario and will no doubt continue to play in the future.

### DISASTER RELIEF

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** We've all heard about the devastation and loss experienced by the residents of Fort McMurray due to the wildfire and the consequent evacuation that occurred. It is a tragic experience, and our hearts go out to all of those affected.

Oftentimes, when tragedy strikes, the silver lining is found in the love and generosity that follows. Especially in Canada, in true Canadian fashion, communities come together to help one another. We share whatever we can, from donations of goods to extra manpower, and do whatever is possible to help ease the pain of our neighbours and help them rebuild.

Since the incident in Fort McMurray, we have heard of people from all over the country coming together to help those affected. Today, I am honoured to share one such story with all of you. This is a story of how ordinary people worked together to help hundreds of Fort McMurray evacuees.

Joining us in the gallery today, from the Singh Khalsa Sewa Club, are members Gurpreet Singh, Harpreet Singh Bal, Gurmeet Singh, Karnjot Singh Cheema and Gurjeet Singh Cheema. The day after the wildfire forced Fort McMurray's evacuation, the members of the Singh Khalsa Sewa Club held an emergency meeting and decided to do something to help. Within two days, each member of the club contributed their personal savings and, with additional donations from the Sikh community in the GTA, purchased essential supplies such as food, medicine and clothing. On Sunday, they loaded about \$50,000 worth of supplies in U-Haul trucks and drove



practically nonstop to the evacuation centre in Lac La Biche.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Singh Khalsa Sewa Club for mobilizing and delivering supplies to those affected by the Fort McMurray wildfires. This club also mobilized to help with food, groceries and blankets for the Knights Table, an organization serving the needs of people dealing with issues of poverty and homelessness in the region of Peel.

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This is an inspiring story of grit, determination, teamwork and a big heart. I'm honoured that they could make it here today, and I hope this inspires others to give back to their communities and stand by their countrymen in times of need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

To our guests: Thank you for that Canadian act. I appreciate that very much. That's who we are.

## MOTIONS

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding House proceedings for Monday, May 30, 2016.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Deputy House leader.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, May 30, 2015; and

That, following introduction of visitors, the Speaker shall adjourn the House during pleasure for the purpose of remarks by the leaders of each of the recognized parties, up to 10 minutes in duration, on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and

That six guests from Ontario's indigenous communities be invited to present remarks in reply of up to five minutes in duration each; and

That the six guests are Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day; Margaret Froh, president of the Métis Nation of Ontario; Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; Sheila McMahon, president of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres; Dr. Dawn Lavell-Harvard, president, Ontario Native Women's Association; and Andrew Wesley, a survivor of the residential school system; and

That all remarks be delivered from the lectern at the head of the Clerk's table; and

That, following these proceedings, the Speaker shall resume the Chair and shall then recess the House until 10:30 a.m. for oral questions or, if it is then past 10:30 a.m., shall immediately call oral questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** For clarification purposes, to ensure that we have this right, the date was Monday, May 30, 2016.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Correct, 2016.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is everyone okay with that? Thank you.

Mr. Bradley has moved that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, May 30, 2016—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the travel of certain committees.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Deputy House leader.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to attend the annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, and the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly be authorized to attend the annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Deputy House leader moves that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to attend the annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, and the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly be authorized to attend the annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures. Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### VISITORS

### VISITEURS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Associate Minister of Finance on a point of order.

**L'hon. Mitzie Hunter:** Monsieur le Président, j'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue aux étudiants de l'Académie Alexandre-Dumas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will make a gentle, off-the-cuff statement that basically says we do not read anything from IT materials in the House, but that was not noticed.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Speaker, May is Asian Heritage Month in Ontario.

Ontario has been enriched in many ways by the extraordinary contributions of our Asian newcomers. For more than 100 years, Asian immigrants have excelled in the arts, business, science, health care, education and other sectors. They have helped build Ontario into a modern and diverse society that is the envy of the world.

Asia has a rich history, with threads that can be seen in countries around the world. That rich history continues in Canada. Some moments in our history are more painful than others. But May is about remembering it all, as it helped shape the community we see today.

The Asian-Canadian community has seen the Chinese head tax requiring Chinese immigrants to pay a fee upon arriving in Canada. We lived through the Chinese Immigration Act, which suspended all immigration for the Chinese. We lost many lives building the trans-Canada railroad, and saw Asians lose the right to vote, and be barred from many, many professions.

But we have seen tremendous growth and success despite these troublesome moments in our past history. We have seen an Asian Governor General. We have seen Asian Canadians elected to office at various levels of government. We have Asian doctors, lawyers, teachers, chefs, Lieutenant Governors and more. We are all shaped by our shared history. You cannot go far without seeing and experiencing the Asian presence in Ontario today.

Speaker, I myself am an example of the Asian presence in Ontario. I came to Canada from Hong Kong as a young man and decided to call Canada home. I am a proud Canadian, and Ontario provided me with a home, a life and a family. But I am proud of my own Asian heritage, as all immigrants should be proud of their personal history and roots.

Asia is our largest source of immigrants, and has been for years. Two million people in our province are of Asian descent. That is nearly one in six Ontarians. Other than our two official languages, Chinese is the most common language in Canada. Of the three largest visible minority groups in the country, Asian and South Asian are the top two groups.

The Asian presence in Ontario and across the country is undeniable. The diversity we all bring to Ontario is what makes it such a unique place to live. Diversity is Ontario's economic and social strength. It also helps us sell Ontario's goods and services around the world. I often say that every immigrant from Asia is a potential trade bridge to his or her former homeland, the vibrant and emerging Asian economies.

I have just returned from a trade mission to China with the Deputy Premier. We were building on the success of the Premier's two recent business missions to China, which have brought billions in investment and thousands

of jobs to Ontario. Asian Canadians have played a key role in helping us leverage these connections.

But most of all, Asian Canadians are our friends and our neighbours. They are our co-workers and community leaders. They are fellow Ontarians.

Speaker, the world has made Ontario home to many. We are lucky to be the destination of choice for people around the world. Ontario has always opened its doors to people seeking a new home, and we will continue to do so. We will continue to be proud of our diversity.

This month, I encourage all people of Ontario to take the time to celebrate Asian Heritage Month.

### PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to honour the great work being done across this province by Ontario's personal support workers. Every year, on May 19, our province marks Personal Support Workers Day to celebrate the contributions of the approximately 100,000 PSWs in our province.

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In the home and community care sector alone, nearly 41 million direct hours of publicly funded personal support services are delivered each year. Our government is committed to building a high-quality PSW workforce with the capacity to meet Ontario's personal support needs now and in the future.

We've been a leader in recognizing the growing importance of PSWs within the health system. Their importance has been highlighted in many of our government's foundational pieces, including the Ontario senior care strategy, our action plan for health care and our Patients First: A Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care.

We understand that the personal support workers delivering home and community care services play a critical role in helping Ontario seniors stay independent and supporting people with complex care needs, reducing the need for more costly care in hospitals and long-term-care homes. That is why our government has taken action, with a number of initiatives to support PSWs. Allow me to talk about a few here.

This includes our PSW workforce stabilization strategy, which will see the base minimum wage for publicly funded personal support services in the home and community care sector raised to \$16.50 an hour. As part of the strategy, we are looking at ways to address the challenges affecting the recruitment and retention of PSWs.

We have also created the PSW Training Fund, which provides up to \$10 million annually to support training and education to PSWs working in home and community care. We developed a common PSW educational standard, which was released in September 2014, to improve the consistency of learning outcomes.

Our government is proud of the investments we have made to attract and retain the best PSWs in the home and community care sector. We are committed to continuing



to build on existing PSW initiatives to further strengthen the profession and ensure ongoing alignment with the health system transformation agenda.

On behalf of our government and the people of Ontario, I want to extend our thanks and appreciation to all of our PSWs for their dedication and commitment to serving Ontarians.

Truly, Mr. Speaker, these front-line workers are the glue that keep our health care system going. The work they do, each and every day, is making a difference in the lives of seniors and their families across this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

#### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Todd Smith:** On behalf of our leader, Patrick Brown, and the PC caucus, I'm pleased to recognize Asian Heritage Month.

This is a time to reflect on and celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Asian Canadians who helped shape our great province, from sports to culture and business to science.

The social fabric of Ontario is rich because of our multicultural identity. Immigrants and their families make our neighbourhoods and communities better places to live, work and play because of their dynamism, work ethic, entrepreneurship and cultural diversity.

Prior to the last election, I served as the community outreach liaison for the PC caucus and attended numerous events, on behalf of my colleagues, in Asian communities across the province.

The leader of our caucus was pleased to host the first-ever Halo-halo party in the PC caucus room at Queen's Park in September, and we look forward to hosting it again this year.

I'm pleased to share that in February, the PC caucus celebrated the Chinese lunar new year with the Chinese community by hosting a dinner, where over 600 were in attendance.

I've had the opportunity to participate in cultural rituals in the Chinese community and celebrate the lunar new year in the Korean community. I've had the chance to hear real stories about how mothers and fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles brought their hopes and dreams to Ontario.

There's a commonality to our dreams. There's a commonality to our hopes for the future of this province and this country. Asian Canadians contribute every day to making this a stronger, more prosperous Ontario with a brighter future.

We could, as we did yesterday, reflect on some of the darker moments of our history, on moments where our immigration laws were discriminatory and the attitudes of our society were less welcoming. There are those moments, and we have, as Canadians, appropriately recognized the impact they've had on our society. We have reconciled ourselves to a commitment to do better, and we have.

Just a few weeks ago, we also marked the Vietnamese Journey to Freedom Day in the Legislature. My colleague from York-Simcoe, who is here with us this afternoon, received unanimous consent to wear the Vietnamese freedom scarves for the first time ever in the Legislature—truly an historic day.

We have always looked at ways to work together as a people and as a province, and I look forward to continuing to work alongside Ontario's Asian community on issues that are important to them.

As member for Prince Edward-Hastings, I invite all Ontarians to take part in the many events that are taking place this month to celebrate Asian Heritage Month.

#### PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my privilege to rise today to speak, on behalf of the Ontario PC Party, as we celebrate personal support workers and recognize the tremendous and indispensable work that they do every day across our communities.

Each day, some 100,000 personal support workers in Ontario—some of whom are here today—play a critical role in the home and community care sector, long-term-care homes and hospitals, assisting patients from children to youth to adults and to the most vulnerable people with disabilities and complex care needs.

As aging becomes one of the biggest issues facing our society, the work that you do in home and community care is becoming even more important. I like to think of your work as not only helping patients stay independent, but also motivating them, being companions who provide emotional support and truly benefiting their overall well-being. In this capacity, you are truly making a difference in the lives of Ontarians and also helping to improve patient outcomes each day.

Yet, let's not forget, our personal support workers remain the largest group of unregulated health care workers in Canada, who are left to perform one of the most important jobs in health care. That's why it was disheartening when the Liberal government secretly cancelled the \$5-million PSW registry that was promised to promote greater accountability and transparency. It sadly is one of the many cuts that this government is making to health care.

Every day, I hear—and I'm very certain that the members in this chamber hear—the same story of people waiting months for care, with some people not even qualifying for the services that they need. Furthermore, I hear stories of people only getting one bath a week and personal support workers unable to complete all of their work in the time they are allocated.

To this end, I respectfully remind the government and the associate minister of their promise to provide better access to care. This means not cutting health care services—such as acute care beds, nursing and direct patient care hours, personal support workers and others—but investing a continuum of care and building long-term-care beds, so that Ontario's most vulnerable patients can access the care they so clearly need.

Speaker, every cut this government makes means more time that the people have to wait to access much-needed health care and more demand on health care workers, including our personal support workers.

Again, on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I offer our personal support workers a heartfelt thank you for the dedicated care and support that you give Ontario patients every day.

## ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's an honour to stand today on behalf of my colleagues in the NDP caucus to recognize Asian Heritage Month.

Asian communities from across that continent have contributed to building Canadian society: from the pioneers, the Chinese railway workers who came to Canada in the 19th century to build a railway and to build a continental nation from sea to sea. We have owed a great deal to those who have come to Canada from Asia.

In the 21st century, Afghans, Tamils, Punjabis, Vietnamese, people from all over sOuth Asia and Southeast Asia—from China, from Korea, from Japan—have made this a far better country than it was.

Unfortunately, as you are well aware, Speaker, there have been dark moments in our history, moments when we didn't treat those Canadians and would-be Canadians with intelligence and foresight, with an openness that we should have had. The apology yesterday for the Komagata Maru, the internment of the Japanese, the Chinese head tax—all blots on our history, and ones that I hope will not be forgotten but will not affect us in the future; ones that have not discouraged Asians from coming to Canada and helping us build this great country.

In my own riding, in Riverdale Park, there's a statue of Sun Yat-sen, one of the great Chinese democratic reformers, someone who needs to be recognized globally. But certainly, in my riding, in the area around Gerrard and Broadview, he's well recognized and revered.

My riding is home to the Madinah Masjid, one of the largest mosques in Toronto—a great hub for commercial activity for a population that is ambitious, energetic and willing to build this community.

Speaker, nations grow and nations learn, and our Canadians of Asian heritage have been a huge part of both that growth and learning over the decades, and will be for decades to come.

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## PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** First, I want to wish a happy PSW Day to all 100,000 PSWs who serve us each and every day.

I was there when the then-Minister of Health, Deb Matthews, announced a PSW registry. I spoke against it at the time and, sure enough, millions of dollars were spent that did not help the PSWs one iota—not one bit. But do you want me to tell you what could help our

PSWs? It is quite simple. We fix our home care system by making home care jobs good jobs and by making PSW jobs good jobs.

What does that mean, Speaker? Very simple: First, make sure that they get to join a union; second, give them fair wages; third, give them benefits; fourth, give them a pension plan; and fifth, give them full-time jobs so they don't have to work three different jobs just to make ends meet. That's something that would be worth celebrating.

The government is all about the transformation of our home care system. How about if we really put patients first? Putting patients first means that grandpa won't have to strip naked in front of a different PSW every week because they cannot recruit and retain a stable workforce. It means they will have continuity of care, continuity of caregiver and good-quality care, which we don't have in our home care system right now.

We have some great examples out there. I want to single out Miranda Ferrier and Kathleen Scott, president and vice-president of the Ontario PSW Association. Without one cent from the government, Speaker, they were able to put together an actual registry that does not have dogs and a truck driver registered as PSWs. They actually do a background check, and if you are a member of the Ontario PSW Association, people can trust that this is a real PSW who has studied and has passed and, as a bonus, has an extensive police check. This was all done without a penny from the government. Funny how their million-dollar investment never gave us a PSW registry, and yet those PSWs were able to do that themselves on their own dime.

I also want to thank Edna Hapin, Chrystal Becker, Lorna Abraham and Lisa Jocko, all PSWs represented by SEIU, who came to see me this morning and who want good jobs, pensions, benefits and full-time jobs.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Niagara Falls on a point of order, I believe.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order. I would like to welcome to Queen's Park Our Lady of Victory Catholic school from Fort Erie. They were here this morning for question period.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments.

## PETITIONS

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician



services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients’ access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I affix my signature as well to this petition.

#### MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** A petition to the Legislature Assembly:

“Better Mental Health Services.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas mental illness affects people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures; and

“Whereas one in five Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime and only one third of those who need mental health services in Canada actually receive them; and

“Whereas mental illness is the second leading cause of human disability and premature death in Canada; and

“Whereas the cost of mental health and addictions to the Ontario economy is \$34 billion; and

“Whereas the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions made 22 recommendations in their final report; and

“Whereas the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, seeks to implement all 22 of these recommendations;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, which:

“(1) Brings all mental health services in the province under one ministry, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;

“(2) Establishes a single body to design, manage and coordinate all mental health and addictions systems throughout the province;

“(3) Ensures that programs and services are delivered consistently and comprehensively across Ontario;

“(4) Grants the Ombudsman full powers to audit or investigate providers of mental health and addictions services in Ontario.”

I sign this petition and give it to page Samuel to deliver.

#### TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** J’aimerais déposer une pétition à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario.

« Attendu qu’il y a un besoin criant en infrastructure de transport routier dans la province de l’Ontario;

« Attendu que d’offrir différentes alternatives ou options dans le choix du mode de transport aux citoyens aide à réduire le nombre de voitures sur les routes;

« Attendu que les transports en commun contribuent à améliorer la qualité de vie des Ontariens ainsi qu’à préserver l’environnement;

« Attendu que les résidents d’Orléans et de l’est d’Ottawa ont besoin d’une plus grande infrastructure de transport;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Soutenir le plan Faire progresser l’Ontario et la construction de la phase II du train léger sur rail (TLR), ce qui contribuera à répondre aux besoins criants en infrastructure de transport à Orléans, à l’est d’Ottawa et à travers la province. »

Il me fait un plaisir d’apposer ma signature et de la remettre à page Julia.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** “Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital is challenged to support the growing needs of the community within its existing space as it was built for a mere 7,000” emergency room “visits” per year “and experiences” now “in excess of 33,000 visits....; and

“Whereas the government-implemented Places to Grow Act forecasts massive population growth in New Tecumseth, which along with the aging population will only intensify the need for the redevelopment of the hospital; and

“Whereas all other hospital emergency facilities are more than 45 minutes away with no public transit available between those communities; and

“Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital deserves equitable servicing comparable to other Ontario hospitals;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Kathleen Wynne Liberal government immediately provide the necessary funding to Stevenson Memorial Hospital for the redevelopment of their emergency department, operating rooms, diagnostic imaging and laboratory to ensure that they can continue to provide stable and ongoing service to residents in our area.”

I will sign that, and I certainly agree with it.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Paul Miller:** “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician

services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows:

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I agree with this, will put my signature to it, and Faiz will take it up.

### CHILD CARE

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I recognize the member from Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to the minister.

I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario about an issue that was recently addressed just two days ago by the Ministry of Education in bringing forward the regulations this addresses, but it's worth saying again here, Speaker.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many parents and caregivers are being charged non-refundable fees to place their children on wait-lists for daycare centres;

"Whereas non-refundable daycare wait-list fees can range from tens to hundreds of dollars;

"Whereas due to the scarcity of quality daycare spaces, many parents and caregivers are forced to place their children on multiple wait-lists;

"Whereas non-refundable daycare wait-list fees impose a significant financial burden on parents and caregivers for the mere opportunity to access quality child care;

"Whereas daycare wait-lists are often administered in a non-transparent manner which creates the risk that they will be administered in an unfair and/or discriminatory manner;

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"Whereas parents and caregivers in Ontario already face significant barriers accessing daycare due to high costs and limited numbers of daycare spaces;

"Whereas quality child care is a public good and not a commodity and the costs of child care should not operate on a supply-and-demand basis;

"Whereas there are currently no regulations in place to prevent daycares from charging parents and caregivers exploitative fees;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that we have a responsibility to take action now"—or two days ago—"and support a require-

ment for transparent administration of daycare wait-lists and a ban on non-refundable daycare wait-list fees."

I agree with this petition, I'm glad we've sorted it out and I'll leave it with page Isabela.

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** It's my pleasure to present to the assembly the following petition:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I have affixed my signature as I am in agreement and give it to Marthangi.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have petitions that come from all over Ontario. I want to thank madame Manon Parrot from Orléans for bringing those petitions. It goes as follows:

"Whereas a growing number of Ontarians are concerned about the growth in low-wage, part-time, casual, temporary and insecure employment; and

"Whereas too many workers are not protected by the minimum standards outlined in existing employment and labour laws; and

"Whereas the Ontario government is currently engaging in a public consultation to review and improve employment and labour laws in the province;"

Therefore they "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement a decent work agenda by making sure that Ontario's labour and employment laws:

"—require all workers be entitled to a starting wage that reflects a uniform, provincial minimum, regardless of a worker's age, job or sector of employment;

"—promote full-time, permanent work with adequate hours;

"—ensure part-time, temporary, casual and contract workers receive the same pay and benefits;

"—provide at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave each year;

"—support job security for workers when companies or contracts change ownership;



- “—prevent employers from downloading their responsibilities for minimum standards onto temp agencies;
- “—extend minimum protections to all workers;
- “—protect workers who stand up for their rights;
- “—offer proactive enforcement of laws, supported by adequate public staffing;
- “—make it easier for workers to join unions; and
- “—ensure all workers are paid at least \$15 an hour.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Aadil to bring it to the Clerk.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I recognize the member from Perth–Wellington. Is it Perth? Yes, Perth–Wellington.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Stormont-Dundas.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Oh, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. Sorry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It’s eastern Ontario. Thank you, Speaker.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Winchester District Memorial Hospital provides essential health services to the residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and was awarded ‘accreditation with exemplary standing’—the highest award by Accreditation Canada earlier this year; and

“Whereas the projected increase in Ontario’s senior population demands that facilities have the resources and capacity required to accommodate increasing demand; and

“Whereas Ontarians cherish access to high-quality local health care; and

“Whereas the recent closure of 14 beds at the” Winchester District Memorial Hospital “and the loss of over nine full-time skilled staff positions at a time when Ontario has experienced unemployment above the national average for over seven consecutive years are the result of ongoing silent funding cuts that are threatening our cherished health care system;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately reinstate adequate funding levels for the Winchester District Memorial Hospital that would allow the reopening of local beds and the rehiring of local qualified front-line health staff.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Laura.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition here to stop the sale of Hydro One. It says:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Benjamin to deliver to the table.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I have a petition here:

“Don’t Balance the Budget on the Backs of Children with ASD.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

“Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

“Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

“Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

“Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

“Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation.”

I sign this and I’ll send it with Samuel.

### SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I have a petition entitled “Stop the Closure of Provincial and Demonstration Schools.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas provincial and demonstration schools in Ontario provide education programs and services for students with special education needs;

“Whereas there are four provincial and three demonstration schools for anglophone deaf, blind, deaf-blind and/or severely learning-disabled students, as well as one school for francophone students who are deaf, deaf-blind and/or have severe learning disabilities;

“Whereas even with early identification and early intervention, local school boards are not equipped to handle the needs of these students, who are our most vulnerable children;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“(a) oppose the closure of provincial and demonstration schools and recognize that these specialized schools are the last hope for many children;

“(b) stop the enrolment freeze at these schools in order for students and their families, who have exhausted all other available resources, to have access to equal education for themselves without added costs, to which they, like all students, are entitled to.”

I fully support this, will sign it and send it with page Samantha.

#### ACCIDENT IN HALTON HILLS

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** A point of order, Madam Speaker: I just wish to inform the House that this morning in Wellington–Halton Hills, tragically, a school bus filled with students en route to Pineview Public School and Stewarttown Public School was rear-ended by a tanker truck. Media reports indicate that seven students have been taken to the hospital, and I know that there’s an investigation under way.

I have spoken to the principals of both of those schools, and I know that I speak for all members of this House when I express that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the affected students. I just want them to know that we’re thinking of them this afternoon.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### STANDING UP AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM IN ONTARIO ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE L’ANTISÉMITISME EN ONTARIO

Mr. Hudak moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 202, An Act respecting participation in boycotts and other anti-Semitic actions / Projet de loi 202, Loi concernant la participation au boycottage et à d’autres actes antisémites.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation. I believe this is a co-sponsored bill. Mr.

Hudak will be sharing his 12 minutes with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

**1400**

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I am pleased to say, as the Speaker rightly noted, that I have worked now for six months with my colleague from across the floor, the respected and veteran member from Eglinton–Lawrence, a man of principle. We share a common principle here: to stand up against intolerance, to fight against discrimination, to fight a new form of insidious anti-Semitism that’s creeping across the globe, including Canada. I’m proud to share my time and co-sponsor this bill with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, Mike Colle.

Speaker, Ontarians have a history of promoting the right to study or work in safe and inclusive environments. We have a proud history, as Ontarians, of standing against hateful divisions, intolerance, exclusions and hostility based on ethnicity, national origin and religion. I believe all parties have participated in support of those important principles.

We now face a new battle called the BDS movement, or the boycott of, divestment from, and sanctions against Israel, Israeli academics and students, corporations and businesses, and cultural institutions. The BDS movement also targets businesses owned by Jewish men and women, Jewish men and women as individuals, and students like those who stood with Mr. Colle and I during a press conference earlier today.

At its core, the BDS movement’s goal is to delegitimize the state of Israel, and in so doing, foster hatred and animosity against those of the Jewish faith and supporters of Israel.

I do hope we’ll continue the bipartisan effort I made with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence and see support from at least two parties in the Legislature on this bill, Madam Speaker. That’s the way it’s happening, as my colleagues know, in the western world. Across the border, in the United States, there are now 22 states that have similar legislation before them: 16 have passed similar bills, with six in consideration. Many of my colleagues here attended an event that Mike and I hosted for Assemblyman Walter Mosley from Brooklyn, the New York city area, who has brought forward an initiative like this in the New York State Assembly—a Democrat supported by Republicans. In some states, there are Republican initiatives supported by Democrats. What’s amazing and remarkable to see is that it’s a bipartisan approach in the United States, where these bills win by overwhelming majorities, supported by both centre-right and centre-left politicians. It’s the right thing to do.

Nationally, in Parliament, we had a resolution condemning BDS for the hatred that it is, supported by both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party; I think there may have been a couple of New Democrats in there—again, showing a bipartisan approach based on strong Canadian principles.

I know many colleagues in the Legislature may be fans of President Barack Obama. President Obama recently signed legislation condemning the BDS move-



ment, calling for sanctions against businesses that support the BDS movement. The Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, 2015, was a bold statement by President Barack Obama and the United States that they will stand against the attempts to delegitimize Israel on an international basis.

Countries that have a similar history of principles in support of liberty and peace have also passed initiatives of this nature—the United Kingdom's government and France.

Let me tell you where this came from, Madam Speaker. I remember being at the Spirit of Hope dinner that many of my colleagues of all three parties attended last year. It's an extraordinary event put on by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center—and I encourage everybody to go to the event next Thursday, as well—supporting its efforts to fight intolerance, to remember the devastation of the Holocaust and make sure that happens to no one again. Do you remember the woman who spoke? She was in a Jewish grocery store in Paris on the day of the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Terrorists broke into the grocery store, took hostages, and killed four French citizens. She was actually there. She talked about her experience in France, and it was a reminder that anti-Semitism is not only strong across the world—I worry that with this movement, it is growing.

Her name is Sophie Goldenberg. She was a witness to the murders of four hostages. The sad reality is she is now leaving France with her family for a safer place. She says many French Jews have done just that.

One of her quotes was, "Today, Jewish people are once again being killed, simply because they are Jews." We cannot just ignore this and let these people deal with what's happening with the world. We should stand for our values and principles.

That shocked me, because I've always known Paris to have a healthy, vibrant, strong Jewish community. But now it's shrinking. The Jews are leaving Paris, coming to North America, going to Israel, because I think for so long, French politicians looked the other way. They ignored creeping anti-Semitism to the point where families are now leaving, feel intimidated and attacked.

That's why we need to draw a line now, here, in Ontario. I hope that legislation in Ontario will be the first of its kind in Canada and copied by the other provinces, just like we're seeing in the United States, to fight back and tell everybody where we stand.

It is frightening, Madam Speaker. British Labour MP Naz Shah recently said that Jews should be transported out of Britain, over to the US. That the level of anti-Semitism has risen to a point when an MP in Parliament, the mother of all Parliaments, would say such a thing: A few years ago, you would have thought that unthinkable.

In many ways, the BDS movement reminds me of the early 1930s in Nazi Germany, which began with boycotts of Jewish businesses.

In 2012, the leading BDS activist, As'ad AbuKhalil, said the real aim of BDS is "to bring down the state of Israel." Again, I remind you this is a leader of the BDS

movement: The real aim of the BDS is "to bring down the state of Israel. That should be stated as an unambiguous goal. There should not be any equivocation on the subject. Justice and freedom for the Palestinians are incompatible with existence of the state of Israel."

I know some folks may argue in favour of free speech and saying whatever you want, but don't forget what this movement is about at its core, and that's the elimination of the state of Israel. It fomented hatred of Jews and those supporting Israel on campuses.

I'll remind my colleagues, too, who have read through the bill: Nothing in this bill prohibits free speech. Listen, if you want to spill garbage, spill garbage, but if you're going to be a business that says you refuse to do business with Jews, Jewish-owned businesses or the state of Israel in an effort to promote intolerance and discrimination, my point of view is, well then, you can't do business with the government of Ontario.

I just think that we have to stand up for something and we should put the weight of government on the side of tolerance, put the weight of government on the side of freedom and an ability to study and to work in peace. That's what core values are for Canada and that's what our bill does today.

I hope, just like we're seeing in 22 states, like we're seeing from President Obama, like we're seeing in the United Kingdom and France, like we're seeing in the Parliament of Canada, that we will have at least bipartisan support for this bill, so Ontario can lead the way in standing up for tolerance and against discrimination and hatred.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I rise today on behalf of my colleagues in the Ontario NDP caucus to join the debate on Bill 202, An Act respecting participation in boycotts and other anti-Semitic actions. This is a bill co-sponsored by the member for Eglinton–Lawrence and the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook.

Before I get into the substance of my remarks, I wanted to comment for a moment on process. For a bill on an issue that is so politically charged, that has such far-reaching implications, it is astonishing that these members have allowed so little time for public scrutiny and analysis. It is astonishing and, frankly, disrespectful of our democratic process. It undermines our ability as MPPs to hear from the people we represent before coming into this debate on issues on their behalf in the Legislature.

Bill 202 received first reading on Tuesday, and here we are, just two days later, in second reading debate.

The short title of this bill is the Standing Up Against Anti-Semitism in Ontario Act. At the outset, Speaker, I want to state strongly and unequivocally that New Democrats—that all MPPs in this House—are united in our commitment to stand up against anti-Semitism. Regardless of where we sit and which party we are from, all MPPs agree that racism and anti-Semitism must be actively opposed and condemned in the strongest possible terms.



1410

Earlier this month, many of us participated in Yom ha-Shoah ceremonies in our communities. In my riding of London West I make it a priority to attend Holocaust Remembrance Day services because I recognize the importance of remembering the six million Jews who were systematically murdered by Hitler, and of honouring the survivors who are with us today. Marking the day each year makes sure that collectively we will never forget, that we will never allow such evil to happen again. Speaker, anti-Semitism is evil. Discrimination or hatred against a people on the basis of race or religion is evil.

We have a duty as MPPs, as Ontarians, as Canadians to protect all our citizens from the ugliness and the injury of racism and anti-Semitism. That is why we have implemented Criminal Code protections against hate speech, which the code defines as speech that promotes genocide on the basis of colour, race, religion, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. It's why we have put in place human rights codes in Canada and across all Canadian provinces: to protect citizens from discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion and many other prohibited grounds.

It's why our Charter of Rights and Freedoms—which for many Canadians defines who we are as a people—begins with a guarantee of freedom of conscience and religion, as one of the four fundamental freedoms guaranteed to every citizen, along with freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association. Enshrining these charter rights in the Constitution recognizes that balancing protection from discrimination with the exercise of these fundamental freedoms can be difficult. But it is precisely when speech becomes offensive, when it becomes repugnant, that the protections of the charter are most needed. And it is within the context of this legal framework of rights and protections that we are having this debate today on Bill 202.

Although this bill deals with more than post-secondary campuses, I understand that its impetus is in the growth of BDS activism on campuses across Canada and the US. I want to be clear, Speaker, that as NDP critic for training, colleges and universities, one of my highest priorities is to make sure that no student faces intimidation, bullying, bigotry or other forms of discrimination at Ontario post-secondary institutions, that no student feels uncomfortable or targeted or alienated on campus. However, our caucus does not believe that this bill is the appropriate way to address the legitimate concerns that students, particularly Jewish students, have raised.

The purpose of Bill 202 is to prohibit public bodies from contracting with any person or entity that supports or participates in the BDS movement and to prohibit public pension funds and college and university foundations from investing in any entity that supports or participates in BDS. Contracts or investments with BDS participants or supporters are to be terminated. This raises the question of how "contracts" are defined. Contracts could mean a whole variety of things. Is an MOU

for student union fee remission a contract? Is a signed offer of admission a contract? Can university students who support BDS be denied the ability to attend post-secondary?

Bill 202 also prohibits all Ontario colleges and universities from "supporting" or "participating" in the BDS movement, with consequences for contravening this prohibition to be determined by regulation. It is possible that these consequences could include financial penalties, as in Kansas and Pennsylvania, where legislation is currently being debated to defund universities that participate in Israeli boycotts? However you define "support" and "participation," there is no question that this prohibition and the threat of sanctions constitute an attack on freedom of speech and association at post-secondary campuses across Ontario. Student unions that organize student referendums on BDS, regardless of the outcome of the vote, would be guilty of participating in the BDS movement. Effectively, this bill imposes a duty on colleges and universities to prevent such student referendums from taking place. It will make Ontario post-secondary institutions responsible for policing the political activities of their students and for silencing public debate on campus, lest the institution be found guilty of contravening the act.

I'm not sure that the institution can be held legally accountable for student activities; however, there is no question that knowledge of legal consequences being applied will have a chilling effect on freedom of expression and freedom of association. It will make students feel they no longer have the right to express their political views. It will also have a chilling effect on academic freedom, which is central to the very mission of the university, as faculty consciously or unconsciously begin to self-censor as they avoid undertaking research or engaging students in discussion on the BDS movement.

Speaker, Ontario New Democrats do not believe that it is the role of the state to prescribe what topics are acceptable for public discourse and what topics are not. It is not the role of government to prohibit citizens from expressing their opinions and debating ideas. Whether we strongly oppose the BDS movement or whether we agree with it, it is our role as MPPs to stand up for individual rights and to defend the freedom of association and freedom of expression of all Ontarians. In the famous words of Voltaire, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

In explaining its opposition to both BDS as well as anti-BDS laws, the Jewish organization Americans for Peace Now, or APN, says, "We oppose boycott-divestment-sanctions efforts targeting Israel. We believe such efforts are misguided, misdirected and counter-productive. However, APN believes that legislation that seeks to combat BDS by undermining academic freedoms and free speech is equally misguided, likely to be counter-productive and almost certainly unconstitutional."

Similarly, there is no question that Bill 202, if passed, would face an immediate constitutional challenge and



would almost certainly be found to violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The ability to freely discuss, debate and exchange ideas, even controversial ones, is critical to the functioning of a healthy and robust democracy. Actualizing the values contained in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms means welcoming the broadest possible range of competing political perspectives into the public realm. It means allowing citizens the freedom to choose which policies and which nation-states to support and which to oppose.

We have the legal tools already in place to deal with racism, anti-Semitism and intimidation on our post-secondary campuses. We have the Criminal Code and human rights legislation. Thanks to the advocacy of the NDP, we now have an Anti-Racism Directorate. Let's use these tools to develop positive, constructive solutions to these legitimate problems rather than seeking to punish those who exercise their democratic rights. The way to deal with complex, contentious issues is through debate, discussion and dialogue, not through the stifling of dissent.

Speaker, New Democrats are standing up strongly against anti-Semitism, but we are also standing up to defend our values, our rights and our freedoms. I urge all members to vote against this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I recognize the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Sport.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** We're here today to debate the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook's private member's bill, the Standing Up Against Anti-Semitism in Ontario Act.

Please allow me to say from the start that our Premier and the government of Ontario condemn all forms of racism and prejudice, including anti-Semitism.

I also just wanted to recognize the students here from York University and Waterloo. I had an opportunity to talk to them earlier today. I know that the member from Thornhill recognized them earlier today, and I just wanted to recognize my conversation with them and some of the stories they were telling me about some of the disgusting acts that are happening on campuses here in Ontario. They have my commitment to work together to find solutions because I want to make sure that when students go to university, college and post-secondary education—any institutions here in Ontario—they feel safe, welcome and protected. You have my commitment.

As you know, this bill has been co-sponsored by my esteemed colleague the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, who needs to be recognized for being a strong advocate in support of the Jewish community and who, over five years ago, brought forward a bill proclaiming May as Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario.

On behalf of the Premier, I'd like to start by stating that the government of Ontario does not support the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, the BDS movement, against Israel. We believe that boycotting Israel will not lead to the much-desired peace that people are looking for in the region. We also believe that shunning those who are advocating for the boycott of Israel,

as this bill seeks to accomplish, will not lead to a more secure, stable and democratic region. Our Premier has been very clear on this issue.

**1420**

Madam Speaker, if you allow me, I'd like to read for the record a section from the Premier's statement that she delivered recently in Israel:

"The BDS position is certainly not mine, nor is it that of our government, and I entirely oppose the movement. In fact, I stand firmly against any position that promotes or encourages anti-Semitism in any way.

"I am not a national politician; I am the Premier of a province, but as a human being who lives in this world, I need to take this position. I take this position as I would take on any position against something that promotes homophobia, that promotes sexism, that promotes Islamophobia. If we are going to have a world that is capable of supporting humanity, then we have to find a way to stand against all of these positions.

"I support the right of all people to freely express their views without fear of discrimination or persecution, whether in Ontario or in the Middle East.

"Freedom of speech is something that all Canadians value and we must vigorously defend. But it's unacceptable for students or parents or children to feel unsafe or discriminated against.

"I oppose movements that are attempting to divide our society and create fear and hate in our communities, whether that is anti-Semitism, homophobia or Islamophobia." That was the end of her quote. I'm going to start speaking again, just so the record is clear.

This proposed bill has drafting flaws with respect to the scope of the issues raised. It aims to enact various prohibitions relating to the support of or participation in the BDS movement by government bodies, public pension funds, college and university foundations, and colleges and universities.

I know that my other colleagues will be speaking and weighing in on this bill today. I believe it's important to highlight that Ontario supports the state of Israel and is a strong ally, friend and an economic partner. Israel deserves respect for its commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

Ontario and Israel have enjoyed a great relationship and trade over many years. Two-way trade between Ontario and Israel was valued at over \$900 million in 2015 alone. Israel is and will continue to be a priority market for Ontario in both trade and research. We have a shared focus on developing strong, competitive business environments in support of innovation and growth.

As you all know, the Premier is currently leading a business delegation in Israel. As you recall, the previous government, under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty, had a trade mission back in 2010 in Israel. The current business delegation is made up of 129 experts from research, technology, business and post-secondary institutions. It is pursuing trade opportunities in Israel, seeking collaboration on research and developing projects, and signing agreements to work together on cutting-edge



technologies. The whole purpose of this business delegation is to further strengthen our relationship with Israel and to further expand our economic ties.

I have more to say, but I just wanted to take the last minute just to say that, as the minister responsible for the Anti-Racism Directorate here in the province of Ontario, we're going to create an awareness campaign. We're going to look for ways to work with large organizations to ensure that they have the tools necessary to identify challenges that they have around racism and anti-Semitism here in the province of Ontario.

I want to work with the member opposite, and I have to thank him for bringing this forward because I do believe it's an important issue. Being someone from the African Canadian community, I know that there are challenges out there for many different people. I know that the Jewish community has always been there to take a stand, to fight for freedom and for what's right. I know that many of the civil rights that I enjoy today here in North America are because of the contribution of the Jewish community.

But we can use the Anti-Racism Directorate to work with our students who are here today and work with large institutions. I'll tell you, we have the tools in place in this province and in this country—the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code—that we can use. When we identify a hate crime that is taking place in this province, we need to make sure that we use those tools effectively to protect our students and protect our people. We will not tolerate any form of hate in this province.

Again, on behalf of the Premier and on behalf of the government of Ontario, I would like to thank all members who are involved in this important debate. I think I can clearly say, without any question, that you have our commitment that we will work toward making sure that when hate crime is happening in this province, it is dealt within the appropriate way; that is, charging and prosecuting people and putting them into the court system.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** As we've heard today from my colleague, the dire social impacts of the BDS movement across the world and right here in Ontario are far-reaching, exceedingly backward and relentless. To begin, I'd like to thank the member for Niagara West—Glanbrook for the opportunity to lend my support to his timely bill calling for a province-wide solution to the growing and disturbing trend of BDS.

We, as legislators, have a duty to ensure that the people of Ontario are free from discrimination. Given the impacts of BDS, it is vital that we live up to that responsibility when it comes to addressing anti-Semitism here in our own backyard and, in particular, its impacts on our bright, young leaders of tomorrow.

Ilia Sucholutsky, an Israeli-Canadian and second-year student at the University of Waterloo, was waiting for the bus one day on his way home from school. He was approached by students asking him to sign a petition.

They asked him, "Do you believe in human rights?" "Of course, I believe in human rights," Ilia thought. But, thankfully, before signing their petition, he probed a little further.

The students with the petition were asking the University of Waterloo to cut ties with Israeli universities, based on the loose notion that the universities were implicit in the murder of Palestinians. They claimed, "This boycott isn't against individuals; it's against institutions."

But, Madam Speaker, how can we say that the BDS movement isn't against individuals? For the Jewish community, the BDS campaign is a reminder of the pre-Holocaust era, when the Nazis first enacted boycotts against Jewish businesses. In Ontario, we hold academic institutions to a much higher standard. So to allow hate to be fostered on publicly funded campuses is simply unacceptable. We, as legislators, have a duty to stop it.

As an Israeli-born Canadian and an academic, Ilia felt this same duty, because he knew that he was not alone in feeling completely uncomfortable on his own campus. In his own words, he said, "Hate is being fostered here." Sadly, enough students signed the petition to call for an automatic referendum, a vote left to the students to decide whether or not they would support BDS at the university.

It was soon found that many of the signatures leading to the referendum were gathered unethically. When an email went to those students who had signed the petition to let them know exactly what their signatures meant—boycott, divestment and sanctions against partner Israeli universities—several hundred students retracted their signatures, stating that they felt bullied and pressured into signing the petition. Speaker, this is not a peaceful protest.

This movement and its referendum absolutely polarized the campus and the community, and did so quickly. It's unfathomable that in an institution like this, Jewish students are made to no longer feel comfortable wearing the Star of David on campus, as some told me.

Marcus Abramovitch called the pro-BDS campaign on campus "aggressive and confrontational." He was scared of how quickly it gained traction. It even got to the point that those students who opposed the BDS movement were called Nazis. It doesn't make sense, Speaker. Israeli and Jewish students were brought to tears, as they felt it was a personal attack on them, on the campus they call home.

**1430**

The BDS movement is an attack on individuals. Almost every single sequence of anti-Semitism has historically begun with a boycott, separation, dehumanization and divestment of Jewish people. As tough of a battle as it was at the University of Waterloo—and this wasn't years ago; this was this past January 2016. But I am so proud to say that the University of Waterloo, the school in my region, voted no to the referendum. It failed with a vote of 1,803 in favour and 2,329 opposed.

Judy Zelikovitz, VP of U of W and local partner of services at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs,



noted, “This would not have happened were it not for the hard work of students on campus who refused to be silent in the face of this discriminatory movement.”

As you’ve heard today, the BDS movement is growing and gaining traction. However, today we have a chance to use our voices and our votes to do what is right. I am pleased to stand united with my colleague today to voice my support in ending prejudice in this province. I, like the University of Waterloo students in my riding, will vote no to BDS.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I’d like to thank the member from Beaches–East York for helping to accommodate my ability to speak today.

This bill means a lot to the people that I represent. I represent a riding that has one of the largest Jewish populations in Ontario, second only to Thornhill. I probably have the largest number of Holocaust survivors in my riding. A number of years ago, I helped establish a meeting place called Café Europa, where Holocaust survivors get the support they need to get through the horrible memories they’ve gone through. I remember Marta, a Holocaust survivor, telling me she was one of eight children. All seven of her siblings were murdered in cold blood by the Nazis, including her mother and father.

These are typical, real stories that our young pages probably don’t even realize happened, but they happened to my constituents. When they witness this insidious thing called BDS, which is nothing more than a world-organized campaign of hate against people because of their religion, they are frightened and appalled that this continues to go on. They tell me that they thought this ended with the Nazi regime in Germany. Now they see the same attacks, telling people to not do business with people of the Jewish faith. They tell people that the state of Israel, which is the only safe haven they’ve ever had—because as you know, even Canada wouldn’t allow Jews trying to escape the Holocaust to come to Canada. They had no choice but to go to Israel. Now they see Israel being attacked, demonized and vilified because it is a haven for people who are escaping persecution.

Why is it that the BDS movement only picks on one country, Israel? Why do they not pick on other regimes? You never see them talk about North Korea, Saudi Arabia or Iran. No, it’s always about Israel, which only makes up about 1.5% of the land mass of the Middle East; yet they’re constantly under threat from Hamas, from ISIS, from all these extremist mongers of hate.

BDS, although they try to clothe themselves in an aura of fighting for a just cause—their core belief is a hate for Israel and a hate for everything Jewish. They perpetrate this hate in many, many ways with a lot of resources all over the world, and I just think we have no other position to take but to say no to this insidious, disgusting thing that attacks the Jewish people just because of who they are.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I’m pleased to rise in support of Bill 202 and my colleague from Niagara West–Glanbrook. Clearly, this bill would potentially put the weight of the government behind tolerance and against hatred and intimidation.

As the official opposition critic for training, colleges and universities, I would like to focus on the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaigns that are increasingly evident on some of the campuses. So I’m pleased that the legislation, as it should, would prohibit colleges and university administrators from endorsing, allowing or participating in the BDS movement.

We need to send a powerful message that if any group tries to impede Israeli businesses and Jewish people by promoting intolerance, then it’s simply unacceptable. This is the time to ensure that there can be no creeping anti-Semitism cleverly disguised in a political statement. Just as we criticize today those who refused to speak out in the past, one day the action we take now will also be judged by those who come after us.

This legislation, which is designed to support cultural and religious intolerance, does not infringe upon free speech. The bill will ensure that Ontario will not support any organization whose campaigns fuel intolerance and anti-Semitism.

A university or college has a responsibility to provide a safe environment, an atmosphere free of intimidation for their students and staff, and it is up to those institutions to preserve it. It’s incumbent upon us to send a powerful message that Ontario stands behind tolerance and against hatred and intimidation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I want to make it also very clear that as a member of the New Democratic Party and as deputy leader of this party, I proudly denounce all forms of anti-Semitism and proudly stand in defence of the human rights of all people. In fact, we stand against Islamophobia and any racism, particularly anti-black racism, and we firmly commit to standing up for the human rights of all people.

At the same time, it’s also very important to recognize how important it is to protect our right to express our thoughts and our freedom of speech. In fact, if we look at our role here as opposition, every day in opposition our job is to criticize the policies of the government. We often denounce the policies of the government, and that is our fundamental right. In fact, it makes our democracy stronger.

In the same light, there are many policies that other countries implement that we are critical of. We have raised many times in this assembly the human rights track record of other countries like China when it comes to their human rights treatment of the citizens who work in factories in China. We look at the treatment of garment workers in Bangladesh, and we criticize that. It is fundamentally a right to criticize the policies of a government, but it is never appropriate to incite hatred, incite violence against any community based on ethnicity, based on



religion, based on gender, based on sexuality, and we firmly oppose that type of speech. Any hate speech that incites violence is inappropriate, and we denounce it firmly.

But at the same time, we must remember that criticism of government policies is what makes our society safer and better. My personal example is that I stood up for the rights of women who are oppressed in India. I stood up for the rights of minority communities that are oppressed in India, like Christians, Muslims and Sikhs. I stood up for the aboriginal communities of India, the Mul Nivasis and the Dalits, who are oppressed people because of a caste system, and because of that I was denied a visa to go to India. That is where we could go if we go down a path of silencing freedom of expression, and that's why I will be voting against this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm going to start by saying that the "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" sounds like such a sweet and peaceful way to make a point, and I think that's what a lot of people in this room have been duped into believing: that this is a peaceful protest, that it's just words and what's the big deal?

Well, it is a big deal because what we're seeing on campuses is intimidation of Jewish students. They don't feel comfortable. They don't feel comfortable showing that they're Jewish. They don't feel comfortable going to Jewish clubs. It's a very clever way to make people feel unwanted and unwelcome in Canada. I thought this was 2016. I'm ashamed by what I'm hearing today, I have to be honest, because I hear a lot of talk about people who go to Holocaust memorial events, who celebrate Jewish Heritage Month, and that's all well and good. But we also need to remember the people who are living today, and future generations. What are we doing for the people today? That matters more to me.

I believe in my heart that if we could bring back people who were murdered in the Holocaust and ask them, "What would you want the government to do? What would you want your organizations to do?", they would say, "Focus on future generations of happy and healthy Jewish generations," because they died for being Jewish and they wouldn't want to feel that they died in vain.

1440

We have a chance now, if we're talking about a Holocaust memorial—we're talking about Yom ha-Shoah—to do something for those people: not just to remember them, not just to say prayers, but to actually do something.

This bill was looked at very carefully by lawyers who say, yes, it is constitutional. This bill was looked at very carefully by people who said that it wouldn't harm businesses that it shouldn't be harming. All this bill is doing is saying, "If you want to boycott Israel, go ahead." As we say in Yiddish, "Gezunterhait." Go ahead and boycott Israel. You know what? Leave your cellphone; throw it the garbage or donate it to a charity, because

there's Israeli technology in your laptop, in your cellphone, your voicemail, the call centres, the alarms that you use for your home. There's the Israeli technology. So don't just talk boycott; show us and do it. Put away all that stuff.

But if you want to do it, if you really want to boycott Israel, if you want to divest from Israel, then don't do it on the taxpayers' dime. You fund yourself. You can have a private university. You can have a private business. You can do whatever you choose to do, but not on the taxpayers' dime.

I want to ask people here how they would feel if there was a Ku Klux Klan, a KKK club, at their children's campus. Would they just say, "Well, we have police, we have laws," as the member said? "We have hate laws. They could call the police." Well, the students were barricaded at a Jewish club on York campus and they called the police. Nobody was arrested. It's not enough. The police have been called and it isn't enough to stop the BDS movement. It's up to us to ensure it.

The States have managed to pass this in 16 states, as we've heard. We've heard Congress has passed legislation. France is starting to realize—a little too late, because many Jews are now emigrating—that they allowed this slippery slope, and possibly they've lost control. They're begging their Jewish community to stay because they feel that they're great employers, that they're great investors, that they're great innovators.

This BDS movement is really a wolf in sheep's clothing. What it is is that Israel is 1.5% of the land in the Middle East and it's only 68 years old. The neighbouring Arab countries that hate Israel so much are basically insulted by the fact that a 68-year-old country was created by people who showed up in swamps—Holocaust survivors who didn't speak the same language and who didn't know how to farm—and they created a country. They feel insulted by the success of Israel.

I want to just mention, very quickly, that the Labour Party in England, in the UK, has been having some problems. Unfortunately, even though I really enjoy many of the discussions with the NDP, I'm a bit disappointed in some of what I'm hearing today from them, because I feel that maybe there's too much of a connection with what the Labour Party is experiencing with some of their comments. People have had to leave their party for anti-Semitic and anti-Israel statements. I'm really asking everybody here to think as an individual, not to think along your party line, and think how you would feel in 2016 as it is.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I'm glad to have a minute here on this very emotional debate. The problem with this bill is right there in section 2: "A public body shall not enter into a contract with a person or entity that supports or participates in the BDS movement," because it castigates all participants in BDS as anti-Semitic, as racists.

My own friend Emmad Minawi is a Palestinian. He eschews violence. He doesn't believe in violent solutions.



But he has a legitimate interest in what happens in the Mideast. He is part of the BDS movement. That's what we need to support—not the BDS movement; we're against that entirely—but we support the right for him to have his views, to express his views. Let's be very clear: You do not advance the issues of tolerance by eroding the very fundamental principles upon which they're based. That's, unfortunately, what this bill does.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I'm going to return to the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook to wrap up.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I thank all colleagues. In conclusion, look, the first thing is legislative intent. There is no intent whatsoever—and I believe the bill is clear that this does not impact on student enrolment, it does not impact on a professor's contract, and it does not impact on free speech in any way. We carefully drafted this to be about the economic side, so business contracts. To my colleague opposite who just spoke on section 2: That is not the intent. I think he knows better.

Also, you can, in committee, amend the bill as you see fit to meet with legislative intent. Section 5 gives regulation-making ability to the Lieutenant Governor to make sure we define this as businesses making contracts. I worry that others are making excuses so they can have it both ways. They're making excuses so they can vote against the bill and try to play footsie with the BDS movement—instead of standing on the strong Canadian principles that we should stand for here today—in favour of intolerance.

Look, if somebody said they weren't going to buy from a business because the owners were gay, you guys would go crazy. If somebody said they weren't going to buy from a business because they came from Pakistan or they're Sikh, people would go nuts. But somehow, because they're Jewish or from Israel, oh, it's free speech all of a sudden? Come on.

It is time to take a stand. This is a growing, insidious movement. The United States is moving, the United Kingdom is moving, Scotland is moving, France is moving and the Parliament of Canada is moving. We have a duty and responsibility to do what is right here, to stand up against intolerance, to stand up against hatred, to bring forward a bill that will ensure that students can study in peace, free of intimidation, to ensure that we can work in peace, and to say that BDS is anti-Semitism and we need to confront it at its core because we know what happens—like Charlie Hebdo or Germany in the 1930s—when we look the other way.

Ontario's role is to lead, to lean in, to make a difference, and not look away.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** We will take the vote for this particular motion at the end of private members' public business.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Transportation should take all necessary steps to ensure the completion of the long-

promised expansion and four-lane widening of Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to the city of Kenora by 2020, and that the Minister of Transportation should provide this House with regular updates on the status of this project every six months.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Ms. Campbell has moved private member's notice of motion number 74. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** It is an honour and a privilege to stand in this Legislature and raise issues on behalf of the people of Kenora—Rainy River. It is also my great pleasure to be able to introduce this motion today to set some firm timelines on the twinning of Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to Kenora. This twinning project is a necessary step in advancing the social and economic goals of northwestern Ontario, as well as improving the safety of the Trans-Canada Highway.

The motion I am introducing today reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Transportation should take all necessary steps to ensure the completion of the long-promised expansion and four-lane widening of Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to the city of Kenora by 2020, and that the Minister of Transportation should provide this House with regular updates on the status of this project every six months.

Speaker, twinning Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to Kenora is important for so many reasons. I've heard from hundreds of people who talk about the need to twin for safety and congestion reasons. People have written to me saying things like, "When there is an accident, our one and only cow trail is shut down for hours. The frustration of being locked in a lineup of several miles, plus lack of gas stations, lack of communication, lack of washrooms all heighten the rage level. There is no way forward and no way back and no information."

Others write, "This would be amazing! There have been so many terrible accidents on this stretch. I am always nervous driving it. People become very pushy with the lack of opportunities to pass. We have watched countless people make dangerous decisions due to frustration. Once you finally get to a passing lane it's ridiculous! Please push for this, my mother and I almost lost our lives on this stretch of highway...."

Sadly, others have pointed out, "We all know someone [who was] lost to this highway, reason enough to fight for twinning."

1450

The fact that this stretch of road was listed as one of the worst roads in Ontario by the Canadian Automobile Association in 2007 certainly supports the concerns shared by so many, but most importantly, this project is as significant to the people of Kenora—Rainy River as it is to the people across Ontario and Canada, because it is our main route that connects eastern Canada to western Canada and all points in between. It is our sole artery and, frankly, it's shameful that our Trans-Canada Highway is a narrow, single-lane trail with twists and turns, barely any shoulders, rock cuts on either side and is seriously in need of realignment for safety purposes. The



fact that there's no consistency of standards for our national highway, even within Ontario, is a disgrace.

For the last four decades, the residents of northwestern Ontario have called for the four-laning of Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to Kenora. So when Dr. Robert Rosehart released his report in February 2008, which recommended that detailed planning commence immediately for the four-laning of Highway 17 between the Manitoba border and Kenora, as well as Highway 17 around Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario, you can well imagine the hope and anticipation felt by north-erners.

People were further encouraged in July of that year when the Ontario government announced a \$546-million investment in northern highways for 2008-09, including route planning studies for the future four-laning of several sections of Highway 17. Then on May 16, 2009, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Premier Dalton McGuinty joined a number of ministers and over 200 municipal leaders from across northwestern Ontario to officially announce the investment of \$100 million for phase one of the project, which included the twinning of the first 10 kilometres in 2010.

At that announcement, government officials made all the right remarks. Former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty said, "Clearly a two-lane highway is no longer sufficient," and "Northwestern Ontario has a tremendous future as a corridor for increased travel and trade between eastern and western Canada," while Northern Development and Mines Minister Michael Gravelle talked about how "Northwestern Ontario is feeling a sense of triumph today" with the improvement of this "critical economic lifeline." The government press release went on to state that this section of the road serves as a "strategic link" in the Trans-Canada Highway system.

It really sounded like the government was finally understanding the importance of this route and that it would finally be investing in some badly needed basic infrastructure in the northwest. But this is unfortunately where the progress on this file came to an end. Since the initial announcement of the twinning, very little has been done by this Liberal government to bring this project to fruition.

Every single northern highways program government report since 2010 has pushed back the planned completion date of this project. The 2012 report indicated a completion date of 2016. The 2013 report indicated a completion date of 2017. The most recent report, issued last year, stated the revised completion date would be the vaguely defined "beyond 2019."

Speaker, it's astonishing to think that a government highway project launched seven years ago, which was initially meant to be completed within a few years of its announcement, will now take at least another four years to complete. Frankly, you can forgive Ontarians for finding it difficult to determine when exactly the government intends to move forward with this project and if it even remains a priority, given the many extended time frames and mixed messages that we've received from government officials.

While the Minister of Northern Development and Mines has continually asserted that this project is still a priority for the government, we've heard differing messages from the Premier and the Ministry of Transportation. In September of last year, this Premier refused to give a timeline on the twinning project, instead only saying that her government hasn't given up on the project yet. Most recently, the Highway 17 twinning project was not included in the Ontario government's 10-year infrastructure plan, ending in 2024, as published in this year's provincial budget. In fact, just last week, the Minister of Transportation's office indicated that it had "no update at this time" as to the completion date for the twinning project.

How can Ontarians trust a government that states, when pressed by media, that this continues to be an important project for them when their own 10-year infrastructure plan fails to even include it as an actionable project before 2025? Ontarians are left scratching their heads as to how a government can so badly bungle a project that will take more than 16 years, from 2009 to at least 2025, to complete—a project, keep in mind, where the construction dollars have already been secured from both the provincial and federal levels of government.

This brings me to another point: This Liberal government talks a lot about the need to have a willing federal partner to accomplish key infrastructure projects across the province, but this is a project where the federal dollars have already been committed to seeing it through. Funding and a willing federal partner are not the issues here. The delay of this project rests solely on the shoulders of this provincial government and, I would argue, the Premier herself.

In fact, many First Nation communities around Kenora, including Shoal Lake 39, Shoal Lake 40, Dalles and Washagamis Bay, have indicated that they have not been properly consulted and have expressions dissatisfaction with the process, which First Nation leadership described as "deeply flawed."

At the time, Shoal Lake 39 Chief Eli Mandamin wrote a letter to the editor of the Kenora Daily Miner and News about being shut out of the process, stating, "We are not opposed to development and growth.... All we have asked for is respect for our way of life, the treaty and our rightful place—"

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Can I ask the government side to please tone down your conversations? Thank you.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I'm going to repeat that, because it's an important quote. The former chief of Shoal Lake 39, Chief Eli Mandamin, actually had to resort to writing a letter to the local newspaper saying, "We are not opposed to development and growth.... All we have asked for is respect for our way of life, the treaty and our rightful place for our full participation in this growth and development."

These communities are expressing concern over things that shouldn't be happening in this day and age in Ontario, and certainly not after this government released a



highly publicized new directive entitled Ontario's New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs in the spring of 2005, a full four years before moving ahead with the twinning project.

Remember the document that the government talked so much about? The one that actually stated: "Ontario is charting a new course for a constructive, co-operative relationship with the aboriginal peoples of Ontario—a relationship that is sustained by mutual respect and that leads to improved opportunities and a better future for aboriginal children and youth.

"Our new approach calls for working with aboriginal peoples to build this relationship and through it, develop productive partnerships, collaborate on key initiatives and achieve real progress on shared goals."

It went on to state that the government is "committed to creating a new and positive era in the province's relationship with aboriginal peoples."

Well, it appears that the directive was just Liberal spin and not worth the paper it was written on, because four years later this same government announced this very important project without prior consultation with area First Nation communities.

When I raised the lack of consultation with area First Nation communities over the highway twinning in estimates committee in 2012, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs as much as admitted that any form of consultation did not start until 2010, the year when the construction was set to begin and a full year after the announcement was made.

At that committee meeting, a representative from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs said, "Minister Wynne, when she was Minister of Transportation, and Minister Bentley from Aboriginal Affairs met with the First Nation back in 2010. Since that time, there has been a number of—I would say progress."

When the consultation did occur, it was a mess. In fact, I was at Shoal Lake 39 when the government official met with the community, and I saw first-hand how disingenuous the government consultations were, where one group of government officials would meet with the community and come to areas of agreement with the community leadership, only to have an entirely new crew show up several months later, informing the community that the previous group didn't have the authority to make such decisions and that they would have start the process all over again.

After a period of time, discussions between the government and Shoal Lake 39 became so broken down that the community refused to even meet with the former Minister of Transportation, turned Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Kathleen Wynne. By 2012, the community had repeatedly told me that it would only deal with the former Premier on the matter.

Speaker, I won't say who the common denominator seems to be in this flawed process. I'll let the people of this House and at home connect those dots. But I will say that our current Premier has a lot of making up to do to fix this mess that has been made and to make this project a reality.

The twinning of Highway 17 is a tremendously important issue, not only for the people of Kenora or my riding of Kenora–Rainy River, but for the whole northwest. This project is important for the reasons I have already mentioned, but its completion is equally important to show that this Liberal government takes seriously the issues facing northerners and that it is capable of engaging in a true relationship of mutual respect with indigenous people and communities. Northerners are calling on all members of this government to step up to the plate and deliver on this long-promised project.

1500

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's always a pleasure to rise in this House and provide comments on the debate, on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge. Speaker, as you know, I'm the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation, and I'm always pleased to be able to add some comments about this, especially in the realm of making historic investments in Ontario—\$15 billion outside the GTHA in terms of roads, bridges and transit investments, historic in this area.

I did want to take a few minutes to address some of the comments that the MPP from Kenora–Rainy River has brought up regarding Highway 17. As we know here on this side of the House, Ontario remains committed to the twinning of Highway 17 from the Ontario-Manitoba border easterly to Kenora, and will continue to move forward with the first 15 kilometres of this project. That span is from Manitoba to Rush Bay Road, stages one and two. As we know, it's often very complex, with a multitude of partners to work with, in terms of bringing these projects forward and to completion. Ontario has several steps to complete the delivery of this project, including obtaining environmental clearances. These environmental assessments are often complex, with a multitude of stakeholders to work with, and take a fair bit of coordination to get them through there. The ministry also works with First Nation communities—and that includes the Métis Nation of Ontario, MNO—property owners and municipalities to not only identify and attempt to mitigate any potential adverse impacts that may arise as a result of the project, but also to make sure that everybody is committed to moving forward with the project and to make sure that all those issues that have been identified are dealt with.

The ministry is also committed to building constructive, co-operative relationships with First Nation and Métis peoples in Ontario and honouring its duty to consult with First Nations and Métis where proposed MTO activities might adversely affect their rights or interests.

Indeed, these are some of the ongoing discussions that we, in this ministry, are having. These discussions continue towards our common goal of seeing the first 15 kilometres of this project constructed.

MTO has provided and will continue to provide reasonable funding assistance to First Nations and Métis



representatives to facilitate their participation in these highway discussions, something that we feel is very important.

The province will continue to invest in highways, creating jobs, and ensuring our roads are safe.

We are continuing with our commitment to invest in our provincial highways, including the north. Recently, I visited Grundy Lake Provincial Park, and I know that the ongoing work on the four-laning of Highway 69 is complex but continues year over year, to be able to complete this project, as well.

We've been investing to keep Ontario highways and bridges in good repair, reduce congestion, improve safety and promote the economy. Since 2003, we've invested more than \$25 billion to design, repair and expand provincial highways and bridges across Ontario, including the north. In 2016-17, we're committing more than \$2.1 billion to repair and expand provincially owned highways and bridges across Ontario. This includes \$541 million in northern highway construction. It's estimated these investments will create or sustain more than 21,000 jobs in Ontario.

So I just really wanted to ensure that the House is aware that our ministry is committed to continuing the ongoing discussions and the work necessary to bring this project on Highway 17, especially the first 15 kilometres of this project, to completion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today's motion brought forward by the member from Kenora-Rainy River is a timely response to another prime example of a government that has made a career out of promising first and, of course, asking questions later. It's been seven years now since the government first announced its commitment for expansion and four-lane widening of Highway 17, the Trans-Canada Highway, and yet this vital trade conduit to the west has not only not been expanded in the years since, there hasn't even been a single shovel put in the ground. All the while, the Liberal government fails to deliver on key promises to unlock the potential of our northern communities.

Speaker, Highway 17 is one of the few key economic corridors connecting northern Ontario to the west. There are no alternate routes between Kenora and the Manitoba-Ontario border for Trans-Canada traffic. However, this government's seven-year failure to make this project a priority continues to choke off economic growth.

It was on July 24, 2008, that the provincial government announced a \$546-million investment in northern highways for 2008-09, including route planning studies for future four-laning of several sections of Highway 17.

In March 2009, the government announced a \$648-million investment in northern highways for 2009-10.

On May 15, 2009, the Liberals announced that the governments of Ontario and Canada would jointly upgrade 10 kilometres of the Trans-Canada Highway, starting at the Manitoba border, with the expectation to create over 700 direct and indirect jobs. The 2009

announcement further reported that, "Planning is also under way to four-lane an additional 30 kilometres of Highway 17 between the Manitoba-Ontario border and Kenora...."

It's now 2016, and despite all the announcements, commitments and investment news, the Highway 17 expansion remains stuck in neutral. Instead of vital highway expansion, northerners receive extended time-lines with each subsequent update of the northern highways program.

The 2012 update indicated a project target completion date of 2016. The following year that date was revised to beyond 2017. Then, in 2015, that date was pushed back even further, to beyond 2019. And now the recent 2016 budget didn't even include the project in the Ontario government's 10-year infrastructure plan ending in 2024. It seems the longer we wait, the more this government is prepared to extend that wait. In the meantime, the economic potential remains untapped.

While we are aware of the First Nation negotiations that have gone on over these years, and the related discussions for the Shoal Lake First Nation Freedom Road project, the fact is that there is no one who doesn't know of the need for consultation when planning developments in the north, and yet the Liberals waited an entire year after their initial promise to begin those negotiations. Promise first, ask questions later, Speaker. In the meantime, the people of our northern Ontario communities continue to wait.

People in northern Ontario are not strangers to this government's inability to support their potential. It was just a few months ago that they experienced the impacts of the government's oversight work on the new Nipigon bridge where, 42 days after its opening, a lifting bridge deck jeopardized the daily transport of \$100 million worth of goods.

They have already waited too long. It's time to get on with the job of supporting the north, expanding the highway and moving forward to unlock the still untapped economic potential of northern Ontario.

I commend the member for Kenora-Rainy River for bringing forward this motion that not only means a lot to her constituents but should mean a lot to all of us here and across Ontario. I look forward to supporting this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It is my pleasure to rise and speak to my colleague's motion today on the widening and expansion of Highway 17. What I want to do is touch on some similarities between some issues they're facing in the north as far as Highway 17, the twinning of Highway 17, and something that we're seeing in the south. You have opposite ends of the province, and the issues that we're having getting this province to complete a project they started years ago and a promise that they made to the widening of Highway 3. The parallel to that is that there were promises made to both northern and southern Ontario to take these roads that are major thoroughfares for businesses as well as civilians who travel them every day to get to work, to get to school, to



get wherever they need to go—they began the work and then they never finished. They made an announcement, they took the credit for the announcement, and then they never finished.

1510

The other parallel is the fact that, on Highway 17, because it has not been widened yet, there are many accidents. You're seeing many people being hurt, many people dying. The same can be said for Highway 3. In fact, recently, we just had a major accident on Highway 3.

I'm just wondering, at what point does the government prioritize the commitments that they've made not only to the north but the commitments they've made to southern Ontario? What we don't need any more are promises being made, announcements, them getting the credit for it and then not actually doing what it is they promised to do, especially when we are seeing people getting injured or people dying while they're waiting for these projects to be done.

I want to commend my colleague the member from Essex because he did bring a motion forward—a year ago this month, actually—to have them finish Highway 3. This was a project, it's important to put out there, that was championed by a former Liberal MPP, Bruce Crozier. He was a member up until his death in 2011. This was something he really wanted to see done, for them to complete Highway 3, because he understood how important that was to Windsor and Essex county; how important it was to not only the businesses but the families who risk their lives travelling Highway 3 to travel from the city, from my area—from Windsor—out into the county and beyond.

I have to commend the member from Kenora—Rainy River because she's trying to do the same thing for her community. She is trying to avoid any further delays. She is trying to avoid any future risk to businesses, and she is trying to mitigate any other opportunity for anybody to be hurt or critically injured or killed on a roadway that the government knows full well is dangerous and needs to be addressed—had promised to do it years ago and has not followed through.

I'm happy to support my colleague, and I really hope that the members on the government side are listening and will commit to supporting this motion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** I'm proud to rise today and speak in support of the member from Kenora—Rainy River's private member's bill.

Speaking to this motion gives me a chance to talk about the importance of transportation to all Ontarians. As someone who campaigned in 2014 on extending the Ottawa LRT to Orléans, I'm sensitive to my residents' and Ontarians' transportation needs. In fact, since being elected, I presented to this House, numerous times, a petition in both English and French to address the transportation needs of my residents through the construction of phase 2 of the Ottawa LRT.

I know the Minister of Transportation is working hard to ensure that we are delivering to Ontarians the

transportation infrastructure they need to live, work and play over the next few years.

We have, as a government, committed \$160 billion over 12 years to infrastructure; a significant amount of that money will go towards transportation. The Liberal platform specifically mentioned the expansion of transportation services in a variety of ways in this province, including expanding GO service.

We on this side of the House absolutely know and understand the value of creating and updating our transportation infrastructure. The member opposite knows that we have committed to the twinning of Highway 17 from the Ontario-Manitoba border easterly to Kenora, and will continue to move forward with the first 15-kilometre project. There are still several stages to complete before the delivery of this project, including obtaining the environmental clearances.

We also have to ensure that we work collaboratively with the First Nation communities and Métis people of Ontario, property owners and municipalities to identify and mitigate any potentially adverse effects that may arise from this project.

Our government has made significant investments in our transportation infrastructure. In 2016-17 alone, we have committed \$2.1 billion to the repair and maintenance of highways and bridges. Of that amount, \$541 million will be spent on northern highway construction. We will be embarking on significant highway projects in the next few years. In the north, we currently have four-lane widening of Highway 69 in Sudbury and the four-lane widening of Highway 11/17 from Thunder Bay to Nipigon.

From a highway safety perspective, our government has brought in legislation to make our roads safer. Last year, we passed the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act, 2015. As part of our bill, as of September 1 last year, the fine for distracted driving increased from \$200 to \$490 and three demerit points if convicted of distracted driving.

The "slow down, move over" rule will now apply. When a stopped emergency vehicle and tow truck are on the side of the road, you will have to slow down your vehicle and move into the next lane when and if possible.

We have committed a significant amount of money towards transit infrastructure. We've updated our laws to make our roads safer, and we'll continue to pursue the creation of viable communities, the end of gridlock and build a variety of transit options for the people of Ontario.

I commend the member for moving this private member's bill, and I feel very happy in support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I know the member from Kenora—Rainy River is going to have lots to comment about in that last speech. Here we are; it's one of these times when us friends from northern Ontario really do shake our collective heads at what we hear from the side of the government. It's just so painfully obvious that members on the government side can rarely pick out northern



Ontario on a map, and we've just seen an example of that here.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Oh, give it a break, Vic.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** You missed what she had to say. You would be insulted if you understood what she had to say and you lived in northern Ontario.

Nonetheless, Speaker, I'm very pleased to speak to the motion brought by the member from Kenora–Rainy River. Highways are the backbone of the transportation infrastructure in the north—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Order.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I hope you listen, because you might learn a little bit about northern Ontario for a change. As I've said many times, roads and bridges are to the north as transit is to the south.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Okay. I'm going to ask the government side to please be respectful of the member speaking on this particular bill.

I'm going to return to the member from Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'll repeat that: As I've said many times, roads and bridges are to the north as GO Transit, which she spoke about, is to southern Ontario.

Four-lane highways are critical infrastructure, not only when it comes to economic development in northern Ontario, but they also add a much-needed measure and degree of safety. As you know, winter brings very harsh and quickly changing conditions to the north, and we've seen way too many fatal collisions on two-lane roadways over the years where, indeed, weather is a factor.

I want to make this point clear: Four-laning of key stretches of highways in northern Ontario cannot and should not be a partisan issue. It took the commitment of governments of all stripes, PC, Liberal and NDP, over the years to complete the four-laning of Highway 11 to my riding in North Bay. It also took 40 years to do it. There's no doubt that that four-laning has saved many lives and has provided us with an economic development tool to promote our area as a place to work, live and grow.

Further, this shows that there needs to be a longer-term, non-partisan vision when it comes to highway infrastructure in the province. Announcing highway expansion projects just before or in the middle of election campaigns, as this government recently did, isn't helpful. Nor is the political stalling that the government uses as a convenient excuse to further delays in the Ring of Fire. Last election, they promised \$1 billion dollars. It's not there; it doesn't exist. And between now and June 18, you can bet they'll announce another grandiose Ring of Fire promise in a bid to get elected.

We've seen how hollow these are. I feel badly for the member from Kenora–Rainy River, because we can't even get this government to commit to an east-west road critical to getting Ring of Fire development going, let alone the four-laning of a stretch of highway.

1520

That said, let's look at this particular piece. It's a key east-west route. I'm not sure what the government has

against east-west roads, but this helps connect key centres like Kenora, Dryden and Fort Frances with key economic centres in neighbouring Manitoba communities, such as Winnipeg. It's actually easier to drive to Winnipeg to catch a flight than to Thunder Bay in some instances because of this distance.

Speaker, as stated before, I've seen the many benefits in my own riding after 40 years when Highway 11 from Toronto to North Bay was indeed four-laned, and I look forward to hearing from the member from Kenora–Rainy River.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you, Mr.—Madam Speaker. Sorry about that.

Twinning Highway 17: Thank you again for allowing me to rise and speak on this bill today. I know I only have a few minutes, so I'll try to cover as much as I can.

In the immediate aftermath of the Nipigon bridge collapse, I raised serious concerns about this government's care of roads and highways in the north. We talked about unsafe regulations for trucks, we talked about failure to properly clear highways of the snow and we're here today to talk about the expansion of Highway 17 from Kenora to Manitoba.

Speaker, we know that this highway has been an issue for years. In fact, in 2007, this highway—2007, Speaker; I want everybody to hear that. In 2007, this highway was rated one of the worst highways in the province by the Canadian Automobile Association. Since then, we've seen announcement after announcement of transportation spending, yet the people of northern Ontario are still waiting to see action.

This government itself called the highway a strategic link between eastern Canada and western Canada. Following the Nipigon bridge failure, did this government not learn what happens when you fail to deliver the proper care that northern roads and highways need?

The people of northern Ontario are feeling left behind yet again when it comes to transportation in the province of Ontario. Whether it's roads being cleared of snow, bridges working or reasonable gas prices, this government seems content to do nothing for anyone from the north who gets in their car every morning.

Now, when I read budget 2016, I don't see the twinning or extension of Highway 17 anywhere in there. It was in past budgets, not this one. The people of northern Ontario, as well as the thousands of people who travel this route and the millions of dollars of economic activity it generates, cannot afford to be ignored. This government needs to stop announcing it's going to move forward with a project. It needs to accept this motion and actually put some shovels in the ground to get this project completed in a timely manner.

This government plans to follow the same old Liberal tradition of planning first and consulting later. This is simply not acceptable. The Premier should know this is not acceptable. She has been both Minister of Transportation and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs during discussions on Highway 17.



Consulting with the First Nations of this province on how to use their land is a duty of this Premier and her cabinet. In order to get this project completed, the Premier needs to sit down with the First Nations of northern Ontario and discuss this project in good faith. She needs to ensure that they are full partners in this process and not simply bystanders. She needs to do this not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it is her obligation.

This project has everything it needs to be a good-news story. This Premier can prove that she wants a new relationship with First Nations here in the province of Ontario. She can provide stable and reliable transportation for those crossing Canada. She can show the people of northern Ontario that Queen's Park does care about their roads and their highways. This government can do this by committing to this project and supporting this motion.

Highway 3 and Highway 17 are two projects that have to get done in the province of Ontario. Nobody—nobody—should be injured or killed on our highways in the province of Ontario because we're not doing our job.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you very much Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker. My apologies.

I was surprised by the comments of the member from Nipissing that—he must know this—none of us over here know this highway. Well, I would suggest that other than maybe the member for Kenora–Rainy River, I've probably driven this highway more than most folks.

As a matter of fact, I remember—because they love to call me the member from Winnipeg, except when it's kind of annoying to them, and it's a little annoying to them today. I remember when Gary Doer, and Gary Filmon before him, and I were getting federal money for funding and twinning, we could not get his government's attention or help, so the twinning stops at the Manitoba–Ontario border. While I and Mayor Canfield in Kenora and Mayor Brown and the mayors in Thunder Bay were working our butts off to get funding for this critical twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway, we got no support from the mayor of the day in North Bay, who sat on his hands and who was quite happy to support a government and run for a party, which I assumed he voted for, that was spending \$1 billion or \$2 billion on highway infrastructure.

We spend that much in northern Ontario alone on highways now. We are doing more twinning in the last 10 years than has happened in the last 40, and we did it in the last 10 years without five cents from the federal government, which would show up and give \$100,000 or \$500,000 for an off-ramp.

He had no problem campaigning for the federal Conservatives when they gave zero for northern twinning—no problem. When he was the mayor, he was absolutely deathly silent on northwestern Ontario. We are putting more money into twinning highways than any other government has. We are spending more money on

highway infrastructure than the party opposite has spent province-wide.

I am very pleased that the member for Kenora–Rainy River raised this issue, and I commit to work with her. I remember when we had an agreement, when Allan Rock was the federal minister, for the bridge for Highway 39 and Highway 40. We had all these agreements in place, and I remember—because our water supply for Winnipeg was there—we signed off on infrastructure agreements with the federal government and with the new Liberal government here in Ontario. When the Conservatives came in, the bridge got cancelled. Now, the Manitoba government, the government of Greg Selinger, built the bridge.

I am happy to be on your side, so let's not make each other the enemy here. I appreciate you bringing this forward, but we have no lessons to learn from the Conservative—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I'm pleased to rise in support of the resolution standing in the name of the member from Kenora–Rainy River.

You know, Speaker, there are a lot of things I miss in the old job of being leader of the official opposition.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** You're still the leader, Tim.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thanks, member from Niagara Falls.

By way of example, I used to have a better view, but you get used to things.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, member from St. Catharines. I appreciate that vote of support.

But one of the things, I'll say to my colleague from Kenora, I miss is going to Kenora. When you're leader, you get to travel across the province. It's a great, beautiful province—all the places to see. I loved going to Kenora. I know my colleagues have been there. It's a gorgeous place to visit—it's a bit far from Niagara; it ain't an easy drive—when I had the chance to be there, particularly in the summer and the fall.

1530

I can understand the member pushing for this resolution to expand Highway 17 to the Manitoba border. I've made that trip myself, not as many times as the member for Toronto Centre or the member herself, and you can understand why this would be important to the economy and to the safety of drivers. There are about 15,000 people in Kenora—roughly in that neighbourhood—and it would more than double in the summertime, a lot of those folks coming from Winnipeg to their beautiful cottages in Lake of the Woods. God bless them for having those cottages. I think there are 14,000 different islands in Lake of the Woods.

I went to a place called Crow Rock Lodge; it's one of my favourite places. I stayed at Crow Rock. I don't know if Ms. Campbell has stayed at Crow Rock Lodge or if she knows it. They took us into one of the remote lakes in the area. Honest to goodness, Speaker, it was like the fish



were actually jumping into the boat to escape the overcrowding in the lake. I'm not a skilful fisherman, but we were pulling them in like crazy. John Baird was with me on that particular trip—a fond memory.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** He went on a lot of fishing trips.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It actually worked out pretty well for him at the end of the day.

I can understand the economic benefits, the tourism benefits of this. I suggest there's been a change. Some of us have been around long enough, like the member for St. Catharines and I. We had the big battle between Frank Michash and Howard Hampton years ago in this riding, a Liberal-NDP battle. If you see election results now, it tends to be an NDP race, and the PCs have been the second-place party in the northwest for the last couple of elections, with the exception of St. Catharines, much like we're seeing. The member for Niagara Falls knows that used to be a Liberal area; now it's an NDP-PC race. Welland tends to have the PCs in second place there. The PCs managed to squeak out a win in Niagara West—Glanbrook despite the local candidate in the last election.

What I worry about is that the election results are determining some of the highway investments. My colleague from Niagara Falls talked about expanding Highway 3. I've been a big supporter of the mid-peninsula corridor south of the escarpment, which would bring benefits to Fort Erie and through my riding, in west Niagara and Wainfleet. But those projects seem to fade when the governing party is down in third in the area, and I worry that might be the case here in Kenora. As the member said and my colleague said, promises were made as far back as 2008 to fund this project and there has not been much progress as a result.

My last comment is that the place I never really got to see was Minaki Lodge. I visited Minaki Lodge and it was like visiting the set of *The Great Gatsby*. Although Minaki, by the time I got there, was closed, I know there's a project now to revitalize that as condos. Certainly opening up that highway capacity to bring folks from Manitoba or even from the northern midwestern states I think would help—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** You may be concerned or wondering why a member from Bramalea—Gore—Malton would stand up in support of this motion. First of all, this motion, I want to make it very clear, is something I absolutely support, and I really commend our member from Kenora—Rainy River. The reason is because in my riding, there is a large population of individuals who work in the transportation industry.

Those truck drivers have told me horror stories of driving along Highway 17, the Trans-Canada Highway. They've shown me videos of when they tried to stop their truck because they had to do some maintenance or they had to deal with it. They showed me how narrow and treacherous the road is and how much of a safety concern it is. But they also pointed out something that I think is

very important to highlight: Not only is this a safety concern, but it's also an economic concern. I know the member talked about this, but I want to highlight this.

If we want to support the free flow of goods between our province and the neighbouring province and if we want to ensure that we have a robust economy, we need to be able to transport goods back and forth. The fact that we only have one route that's in our country and that route is so narrow and so treacherous and so dangerous is absolutely unacceptable. The fact that this government has done nothing to ensure that this stretch of highway is twinned or doubled or widened is also unacceptable.

So I stand very proudly in support of our member and I stand strongly in support of the transportation industry, which is very vibrant in my riding. I stand with the truck drivers in my riding who have called for this for economic reasons and for safety reasons, and I stand with them in ensuring this is something we need to see passed. We want to push the government to make this happen. The passing of this motion is one step forward, but we need a commitment from this government that they will actually move forward and twin this highway, widen this highway, make it safer, ensure that we have the economic development we need, ensure that we have roads so we can transport goods back and forth in a safe manner.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It is an honour to be able to stand here and support my colleague from Kenora—Rainy River regarding this issue about four-laning highways. Every community in northern Ontario pushes for this issue. I know that my own communities are setting up committees to start four-laning and to push the government to four-lane.

But can you imagine how cruel it is for these people if you have the Prime Minister and the Premier, and they invite 200 municipal officials—if this happened in my riding, everyone would think, “Oh, my God. It's finally happening. The Prime Minister, the Premier. It's finally happening.”

And do you know what happened? Nothing. That is the cruelest part, because if that happened in my riding, after years of working—because I'm sure that the people in that area have worked and worked and worked for years to try to get people's attention. Then, it turns out that it's maybe nothing more than an electoral ploy.

Maybe it wasn't, but how cruel is it? I know that, if that announcement was made in Temiskaming Shores, and the Premier and the Prime Minister said, “We're going to four-lane this highway,” it would be a big sigh of relief and there would be a big party that night. Then, nothing changes.

That is why I commend the member to keep this up and keep everyone's feet to the fire, because that part of the highway deserves to be twinned and the whole Trans-Canada needs to be twinned. But they got the promise, and that promise should be kept.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I will return back to the member from Kenora—Rainy River to wrap up.



**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I want to start off by thanking all members of this House from all three parties who stood up and spoke in support of this particular motion.

I do want to spend just a couple of minutes reframing this debate, though. I appreciate that not everybody knows the geography and the reality of northwestern Ontario, but we don't have the luxury of having transit options. Talking about GO Transit—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I know. There are parts of this province that are very blessed. That's one of the things that I'm talking about. We're not talking about the expansion and widening, which is a very important project that's happening in Sudbury 1,500 kilometres away. These are important projects, but we're talking about what's happening at the Manitoba border.

What we have is we have a two-lane highway. That means one lane in each direction. There's no divider. People are travelling and people speed, right? We're talking about narrow, winding roads. We're talking rock cuts on both sides. Really, no disrespect meant at all to the member from Nipissing: We don't have the luxury of texting zones. We're talking very basic infrastructure.

We need this investment. It's something that, as the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane said, was promised to us. After a 40-year fight, we finally got it. We thought that we were getting it, and we need the government to deliver on that.

What I'm asking for today is for very clear targets, because we've seen this date bounce all over the place. I know that there are a number of issues that are causing that to happen, but we need the government to sit down in earnest and make this project a reality. We also need updates every six months, so that we know that this project is on track.

These are the things that we're asking for, and I really hope that we'll get the support of all members in this House.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** We will vote on the motion at the end of private members' public business.

SAFE TEXTING ZONES ACT, 2016  
LOI DE 2016 SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT  
DE HALTES TEXTO SÉCURITAIRES

Mr. Fedeli moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 190, An Act governing the designation and use of texting zones / Projet de loi 190, Loi régissant la désignation et l'utilisation des haltes texto.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Mr. Fedeli has moved second reading of Bill 190, An Act governing the designation and use of texting zones.

Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It's a pleasure to speak to this private member's bill. This bill has the potential to save many lives. It's called Bill 190, Safe Texting Zones Act.

It's fitting to speak to this bill during the RCMP's Canada Road Safety Week and right before the May long weekend, when many Ontarians will be travelling.

1540

Anybody who drives here in Ontario has encountered other drivers who are staring down at the dimly lit screens of their cellphones, as opposed to paying attention on the road. We know that distracted driving, such as texting while driving, leads to bad driving and dangerous situations. Research and statistics on this are clear: Texting while driving poses a major risk for drivers and those they share the road with. In fact, distracted driving deaths in Ontario have surpassed those of impaired driving for the seventh consecutive year.

According to the Ministry of Transportation, research shows that drivers who use cellphones are four times more likely to be in a collision than drivers who focus on the road. When drivers take their eyes off the road for more than two seconds, the crash risk doubles. The Ontario Provincial Police cite distracted driving as a causal factor in 30% to 50% of traffic collisions in Ontario. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 80% of collisions and 65% of near crashes have some form of driver inattention as a contributing factor.

Perhaps the message is starting to cut through. You have likely seen or heard about the billboard that went up along the Gardiner Expressway. In fact, it was a front-page colour photograph in the Toronto Star about a week or so ago. In bold, black letters against a plain white background, the billboard encourages drivers with three words: "Text and drive." It's brought to you by Wathan Funeral Home. You can see, of course, the fact that it's a shocking billboard, a little bit tongue-in-cheek. But let's face facts: Drivers who text messages are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash.

This also has significant economic impacts. According to the government of Canada, economic losses caused by traffic-collision-related health care costs and lost productivity are at least \$10 billion annually. That's about 1% of our GDP.

What is Bill 190 all about? People are asking, "What is a safe texting zone?" A texting zone is simply an area where a driver is able to park or stop safely to use their wireless device. Bill 190 proposes to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act with the aim of combatting distracted driving. Specifically, it authorizes the Minister of Transportation to create designated highway texting zones where a driver is able to stop safely to use their device. This includes existing commuter parking lots, transit stations or service stations, and does not require any new infrastructure.

The real impetus of this bill would require that signage be displayed approaching these texting zones. These would remind drivers that there is a nearby opportunity for them to legally and safely use their cellphone. Of course, people can still use their hand-held devices if a vehicle is pulled off a roadway or lawfully parked. This



bill would designate specific areas to do exactly that, to assist drivers in obeying the law. Designating specific texting zones would be especially helpful in reducing distracted driving on highways in rural and northern areas, where frequent picnic stops and rest stops along the highway would offer an opportunity for travellers to safely use their cellphones.

I am pleased that Bill 190 has received support from so many stakeholders, including the insurance industry and safety advocates. In a recent letter of support, the Insurance Bureau of Canada indicated, "This initiative shines a light on a growing road safety issue; namely, the need to combat distracted driving on Ontario highways. Statistics show that drivers are 23 times more likely to be involved in a collision if they text while driving. Unfortunately, statistics such as this do not deter enough people, as nearly three out of four Canadian drivers admit to driving while distracted. Establishing 'texting zones' on Ontario highways would be an important step in curbing the dangers associated with this activity."

There is a precedent for this, Speaker. Patty and I drove through Pennsylvania and saw this, which was part of the inspiration for this. In 2013, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo established texting zones across through-way and state highways in his state of New York. Existing park-and-ride facilities, rest stops and parking areas along the roads were to be equipped with texting zone signage, each serving double duty as one of the 91 locations across the state.

When introducing the initiative, Governor Cuomo said, "With this new effort, we are sending a clear message to drivers that there is no excuse to take your hands off the wheel and eyes off the road, because your texts can wait until the next texting zone." I think that's something we can all agree on.

Not only will the Safe Texting Zones Act save lives, it also serves as an important educational initiative. Impaired driving has rightly been heavily stigmatized and is not accepted in our society, but the fact is, distracted driving deaths in Ontario have surpassed those of impaired driving for the seventh consecutive year. This may be particularly true when it comes to our youth drivers. In some cases, they have grown up with these devices and may not be aware of the link between distracted driving and collisions.

This legislation will provide more awareness and make it crystal clear to new drivers that texting while driving is unacceptable. Bill 190 will ensure there is a consistent and standardized signage approach on Ontario's highways that serve to regularly remind drivers of the dangers of texting and driving.

Desjardins Insurance Group echoed this in their letter of support: "This bill brings much-needed attention to distracted driving, an increasingly prevalent road safety issue ... we are committed to raising awareness of these dangerous habits and encouraging Ontarians to drive responsibly on the road. The establishment of 'texting zones' on Ontario highways would move us toward our shared goal of making Ontario roads safer."

As you know, Speaker, it is currently illegal for drivers to talk, text, type, dial or email using hand-held cellphones and other such devices. We must continue to deter this dangerous behaviour, and motorists who text and drive must be penalized. However, smart phone users in Canada topped nearly 70% of the population in 2015, and these devices have become a ubiquitous part of our lives. The creation of safe texting zones recognizes the fact that drivers may require the ability to stop and safely text while travelling.

In a letter of support, the CAA agreed with this sentiment: "Efforts like safe texting zones would provide motorists with safe, off-road options to use their devices before resuming their travels. This could help reduce the attraction of using a hand-held device while operating a vehicle."

The Ontario Safety League, an important safety advocate in the province, has also voiced their support for Bill 190. Their letter states, "Distracted driving is everywhere. It doesn't matter how many years of experience you have behind the wheel; we are all affected by distracted driving behaviour. The Safe Texting Zones Act is a chance for Ontario to lead the way with legislation to bring awareness to this issue and work towards safer roads in Ontario."

Combatting distracted driving is a non-partisan issue. That is why the official opposition supported the government's Bill 31, the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act. However, increased fines are not enough to curb distracted driving habits. The implementation of texting zones provides a practical solution that works in tandem with past initiatives.

In a letter of support from Aviva insurance, this illustrates how Bill 190 builds upon the distracted driving measures of the previous bill: "In 2015, Aviva supported the Ontario government's passing of the Making Ontario Roads Safer Act, which consists of increased fines and assigning demerit points to anyone convicted of distracted driving ... MPP Vic Fedeli's PMB will contribute to the government's efforts to reduce the number of accidents caused by distracted driving and make roads safer for all Ontarians."

**1550**

To reiterate, Bill 190 aims to combat distracted driving through the creation of designated highway texting zones, where a driver is able to stop safely to use a cellphone. Primarily, it would require signage be displayed along the highways to remind drivers that there is nearby opportunity for them to legally use their cellphone.

Passage of this legislation would continue the bipartisan action to address our growing problem of distracted driving. The Safe Texting Zones Act sends a clear message to distracted drivers that there is no longer any excuse to endanger themselves and those they share the road with. Their text can wait until the next texting zone. In doing so, they will be taking a concrete and positive step towards distracted driving.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?



**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you for allowing me to rise and speak on Bill 190 today, called the Safe Texting Zones Act—that's a mouthful, really. This bill calls for spaces along our highways to be set aside to allow people to pull over and safely send text messages. It would also enable the province to put up the appropriate signs to tell people when these zones were coming up with lots of notice. The ideal here is to ensure that people don't check their phones while they're driving, but instead pull off the road and check their phone, and then continue driving safely.

This is another piece of legislation that we're debating in this House because of a newer problem that is incredibly dangerous, the problem of distracted driving. When I was discussing this bill with stakeholders, a number of stats kept coming up over and over again in the discussion. I think they're very important, so I'd like to read them into the record so that anyone watching at home or reading this later can understand why this is an important topic.

The RCMP notes that in 80% of collisions, the driver has taken their eyes off the road for three seconds before the collision. When you text and you drive, you are 23 times more likely to crash your vehicle. Even though a person might think they're just going to read a text or maybe they'll type a little bit and then look at the road and then go back to typing, it doesn't make a difference. We know that people come up with all sorts of plans that they use to convince themselves they're just sending one more text, until it goes wrong. It just happens too fast to be able to react.

Speaker, we know that distracted driving is the number one reason—the number one reason; we all thought it was drunk driving, quite frankly—for fatalities on our roads today. As a father and a grandfather, these numbers send chills down my spine. Texting and driving isn't something that affects just one part of our population. This is interesting, too: Older people, seniors are doing it, and young people are doing it, and it's putting people at risk.

I agree with groups like the CAA and the insurance industry and road safety groups who have stood up and said this needs to be ended right away. I also know that the police have made a few comments about this bill. Essentially, they're saying they support anything that makes our communities safer. They're also saying that this is a good start, but it's only one piece of a larger puzzle. It's only one part of what we have to do to eliminate distracted driving.

I know the police in my riding of Niagara Falls are absolutely dedicated to protecting the communities in Niagara. I believe the Niagara region police do an excellent job of putting public safety first, and when they make recommendations, we all shouldn't take it lightly. When our police force makes recommendations, we shouldn't take them lightly in this House, either.

I can say that the member from Nipissing, who put this bill forward, has the same aims as we do: to try and stop people from texting and driving. For that reason,

we'll be recommending that this bill move to committee. In committee, we want to hear from stakeholders like the CAA and automobile safety groups. We want to hear from other groups. Most important of all, we want to hear from ordinary people from around the province. We want them to weigh in on their experience fighting texting and driving. We want to hear if this is the sort of legislation that they feel will help, or if they feel there are better ways we can be fighting back against distracted driving. We want to hear from those who are affected by distracted driving. In this House, we're working to stop distracted driving, and we want to see if the experts and the residents feel this bill will accomplish that goal.

I've spoken many times before on this issue. I still believe there are major concerns around the lack of education that exists when it comes to distracted driving. I know the member from Nipissing met with these same stakeholders when putting this bill together, and it's really terrifying to hear how dangerous texting and driving has become on our roads. I'm sure he's just as terrified about the stats as I am.

I'm sharing my time with one of the other members, so I'll stop right there. Thank you very much for giving me six minutes of your time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon and add some comments on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge on a very important discussion this afternoon.

I always like to remind people in the House that Ontario's roads rank first or second year over year in North America for road safety, and road safety continues to be our top priority.

Any discussion we have on bills by members that seek to improve road safety, especially when it comes to distracted driving, is very welcome. I want to commend the member from Nipissing for bringing this bill forward to help strengthen the fight against distracted driving on our roads. It's a very interesting discussion this afternoon in the House.

I know that if current collision trends on Ontario highways continue, fatalities from distracted driving may exceed those from drinking and driving in the very near future. Indeed, in some municipalities that has already occurred.

I was just at the launch of the Arrive Alive Drive Sober summer campaign talking about the danger of drug and alcohol impairment when operating a vehicle, but I know there's a large focus on distracted driving as well because of the scourge on our roads. Story after heart-breaking story arrives in our emergency departments on preventable deaths and injuries from this terrible thing.

I know that the member from Nipissing has already outlined the statistics. A driver who uses a cellphone is four times more likely to be involved in an accident than drivers who continue to keep their focus on the road.

I went to speak to a couple of insurance groups when Bill 31, the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act, was



coming through the House. The two things the insurance companies wanted to talk about was distracted driving measures, the strengthening of that law in this proposed bill, and they also wanted to talk about self-driving vehicles, which we won't talk about today. But they were very supportive of seeing Bill 31 passed.

1600

It's also why our government continues to lead the charge against distracted driving. In February 2010, police began issuing tickets for this completely preventable offence, but with the passing of Bill 31 last June, drivers now face stiffer fines and penalties upon conviction, increasing the fine range from \$300 to \$1,000, making Ontario amongst the highest fine ranges in Canadian jurisdictions. Our government also made regulatory changes that apply three demerit points upon conviction for distracted driving.

But in saying that, people still don't have the message. I had to go to Boston to see my new granddaughter. She was a few hours old. She was born in Boston on April 29. Along that long drive from Boston—which was a pretty exciting drive, to go and meet this new baby—I did note, much like the member from Nipissing noted, the “text stop” signs along the major highways. I agree with the member from Nipissing: It was a good reminder, when you were in the car for that long, that “Whoa, yes, I have been out of touch, but okay, five kilometres down the road, there's a text stop.” So it was a good reminder that you'd get there soon.

There's no easy solution to changing inappropriate driving behaviour, and I think that this is a good reminder. We continue to monitor some of the progress we're making with the new stiffer fines and penalties, but I still wonder whether more needs to be done. I know that we've got a signage pilot at just four ONroute sites, one near me in Cambridge north, but the other three sites are in Port Hope, King City and Woodstock right now as a pilot project. This is after the OPP approached MTO regarding the introduction of “text stop” safety signage near these select service centres.

We know there are approximately 185 provincial roadside rest stops, including 23 at provincial highway service centres, picnic areas, scenic lookouts, parks and historical sites across Ontario, that provide drivers with that opportunity to pull off the highway and check their map or be able to check their texts.

I know the ministry right now is reviewing options to improve rest areas throughout Ontario to provide better and more frequent rest stop opportunities with adequate washroom facilities. I know it's a perfect time to be looking at increasing “text stop” signs across Ontario.

I agree with the motion and I will certainly be supporting this important bill to get it into committee to have further discussion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** It's my pleasure to be able to speak to Bill 190, safe texting zones, today and support it.

We all know that distracted driving poses a major risk for pedestrians and drivers alike. I want to stop there with pedestrians because they, too, expose themselves. I walk around the downtown core area and I'm astounded at the number of people who are not looking where they're going, as if somehow it's different when you're walking than when you're in a car. But for the seventh year in a row, distracted driving deaths have surpassed impaired driving deaths, and I think that's another point at which we should be confronting the seriousness of this issue. While there are many ways that a driver can be distracted, texting is the growing issue.

The Safe Texting Zones Act claims to combat distracted driving through the creation of designated highway texting zones. Essentially, a texting zone is an area off to the side of the highway where a driver can safely pull over to use their phone legally. Appropriate signage, obviously, would be required.

Drivers who text while driving must be penalized. There is no question about that. However, we must also recognize that texting is an important part of communication in today's day and age. From providing friends and family with an estimated time of arrival, to reminding a spouse to pick up some groceries, to just checking in to make sure the driver is safe, texting is a quick and easy way to share information with the people we love and care about. By creating safety zones, we can give drivers the opportunity to safely and legally text without putting the safety of other drivers and those who use the road at risk. If passed, the Safe Texting Zones Act would send a clear message to distracted drivers that there is no longer any excuse to take that risk.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, research shows that drivers who use cellphones are four times more likely to be in a collision than drivers who are fully focused on the road. When a driver takes his eyes off the road for more than two seconds, his crash risk doubles.

When I consider this bill, I can't help but think of Highway 400, which many of my residents rely on. While, yes, there are places to pull off for a quick stop, such as the Cookstown outlet mall, a sign for a safe texting zone also serves as a reminder to the other drivers that they need to be focused on the road.

Recognizing that there are areas with little or no cellphone service, texting zones would be a great benefit in areas with poor cellphone service, such as in rural and northern Ontario. Never mind that far away, in my own riding, people may be driving and checking to see if their phones have service. A texting zone would, of course, be in an area where, in fact, there is service, and this would give the drivers the confidence that they will be able to communicate while staying safe off the road.

In my riding, of course, we have the usual Monday-to-Friday rush hours, but we also have our own special version of rush hour, and that's Friday and Sunday nights as people drive up and down the 400 to and from their cottages. Drivers need to know that all passengers should always be wearing a working seat belt, that drinking and



driving is never acceptable, nor is any form of distracted driving, and finally, that no matter how much of a rush you are in, dangerous cutting and weaving through traffic puts you and others at risk.

I'm pleased to stand today and voice my support for this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm pleased to be able to speak today to Bill 190, regarding safe texting zones, and I want to thank the member from Nipissing for bringing this bill forward.

We live in an age where immediate communication is seen as essential. Not that long ago, it was normal to receive a message a few hours after the caller had left it for us, and it might take a while for us to follow up. But we live in a different time now. Since the dawn of cellphones, there has been an ever-increasing desire and expectation that we act on things immediately.

There are certainly some benefits to this easy access to immediate communication. For example, in case of emergency, lives can be saved quickly by quick action. But there's most definitely a downside. Very few of us can honestly say that we have never used our cellphone at an inappropriate time: during conversation, in a meeting, speaking loudly in a public place.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** In the House during debates.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** During the House, during debates—that's right.

In the past, this would have been considered exceptionally rude, and while it may be frowned upon now, the acceptance of these practices is growing every year. I think it's unfortunate but it is the reality that we live in. A whole generation is growing up without knowing anything different.

I think it's important that we remember that there are two elements at play. First is our desire to jump on things immediately, to know things as soon as they happen, and that we need to respond quickly and sometimes without thinking. But there is also an exception from others—an expectation, rather, not an exception—an expectation that we respond immediately. I know many bosses are guilty of demanding an employee's immediate attention. They claim that a paid BlackBerry is a perk of the job when, in fact, it's a leash that prevents the workers from straying too far from their masters. I think we all need to take a responsibility not to put unrealistic or unsafe expectations on others.

Sending or receiving a text message takes about five seconds. That's five seconds when your eyes are not on the road. It doesn't sound like a lot of time, but if you're travelling at 90 kilometres per hour, that's enough time to take you from one end of a football field to the other. A lot can happen in that time. And if your eyes are effectively closed, it can have a devastating effect.

1610

For the past seven years, more people have died as a result of distracted driving than of impaired driving. In 2014, the OPP reported 73 deaths caused in distracted-driving-related collisions.

Last year, this Legislature passed the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act. This act brought in some important and helpful amendments to the Highway Traffic Act to discourage drivers' use of hand held devices. It is hoped that increased penalties and raising awareness will have an impact on distracted driving. It may be too early to tell just how effective that new law has been, but I do know, just from my own observation, that texting while driving is still a bad habit that many find hard to quit. We still have a lot of work to do, and I think this bill helps us along that road.

A similar law was put into place, as we heard earlier, in New York state a few years ago to combat texting while driving in a way that was understood and that tried to accommodate this growing need for instant communication. As this bill proposes, New York set up safe texting zones, with signage to identify where they were. They also posted signs along the highway saying, for example, "It can wait: Text stop five miles."

I think that's clever language. It gives you information about when you can check your messages, and it drives home the point that things aren't that important, that things can wait just a few minutes.

I'm pleased that the member has brought this bill forward and I intend to support it, but I do have a couple of comments that I would like to see addressed.

The first is to make sure that these areas are truly safe areas. If a person pulls over to text, it is highly likely that they are alone in their car. Being in a designated area means that they could be easily targeted by someone who is lurking in the vicinity. I would suggest that safe texting areas be adequately lit so they are fully visible and will deter anyone from taking advantage of a vulnerable person.

The bill states, "The minister may by regulation designate any part of the King's Highway where the shoulder of the highway may be used as a texting zone." Further, it says, "No person shall drive, park, stand or stop a vehicle in any part of a texting zone except in accordance with this section and a regulation made under it."

Now, on a 400-series highway, drivers are not permitted to park on the shoulder, other than in the case of an emergency. Given this, Speaker, what the bill seems to say is that drivers who have an emergency on a 400-series highway are not allowed to use the designated safe texting area. In effect, those wishing to text are given priority over those with an emergency. I'm sure that's not the intent of the member for Nipissing with this bill, but it is something that I would like to see clarified as we amend it through the committee stage.

I appreciate the opportunity to have a few moments and to give my support to this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to the member from Nipissing for introducing this bill. I am pleased to speak to Bill 190, the Safe Texting Zones Act. Our government is very concerned



about the issue of distracted driving. With the passage of Bill 31, the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act, this past June, drivers now face stiffer fines and penalties upon conviction.

I agree with the member from Nipissing that that's simply not enough and we have to do more to deter drivers from texting while driving. It's a very serious thing that afflicts our society.

Our government is leading the charge against distracted driving, and we need to continue to work towards reducing texting and driving among our citizens.

Demands of daily life may mean we need to multitask, but safety is always of paramount importance, Madam Speaker. This bill sends a clear message to drivers that it is not acceptable to pose a danger to their own life or the lives of others.

There are universities and colleges adjacent to my riding of Durham, and many of my young constituents in Durham attend these institutions. I think it is vital for them to learn that texting and driving should not be normalized or tolerated and that there are safer options.

Using this piece of legislation, we can break the habit before it even begins. This is an innovative way to change the view that texting while driving can be done if you're careful enough.

Texting while driving cannot be done under any circumstances. The reality is, the chance of an accident dramatically increases the second you take your eyes off the road, and it's just not worth the risk. Research indicates that drivers who use cellphones while driving are four times more likely to be in a collision than drivers who purely focus on the road, and that risk doubles for drivers who take their eyes off the road for more than two seconds.

Not only has our government already made regulatory changes that subject drivers to the loss of three demerit points should they be convicted of distracted driving, but this would now present a proactive solution. I do hope that other provinces will see the steps we are taking to prevent distracted driving right here in Ontario.

I am pleased to support this piece of legislation. Thank you to the member from Nipissing for the introduction of this very important piece of legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I'm proud to rise in support of Bill 190, brought forward by my colleague from Nipissing. To echo the other members who have spoken before me, texting while driving poses a major risk for drivers and those who share the road with them. In fact, distracted driving deaths in Ontario have surpassed those of impaired driving for the seventh consecutive year. The bill aims to combat this growing issue and would create designated texting zones where a driver is able to stop safely and use a cellphone. It would also require that signs be displayed approaching the texting zone to remind drivers that there's a nearby opportunity for them to legally and safely use their cellphone.

Speaker, we recognize that most people have a smart phone today. New devices hit the market each year with

the ability to keep us more connected to the world around us than ever before. Texting, email, pictures and video—all those aspects are available at the touch of a button. This would have been unthinkable even two decades ago. Now these connected lifestyles are the norm. The Safe Texting Zones Act would create areas where drivers can stop and text, can stop and stay connected, and do so safely.

This bill would continue to build upon the message that texting while driving is not excusable—that one text can wait until the next texting zone—and reading or responding while driving is not worth the danger you create for yourself and those around you.

Speaker, we must be smarter about using the options that are available to us today. We're constantly wired into a host of communications devices, and whether we admit it or not, we sometimes have to be reminded to do the right thing.

This bill, when passed, will provide reminders to every driver that trying to be linked to their mobile devices when driving is extremely dangerous.

Speaker, I'm pleased to stand in support of the member for Nipissing's bill, and I encourage all members in the House to please support his important work towards improving and strengthening safety and, more importantly, saving lives.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** It's always a pleasure to stand in the House on behalf of my constituents in Burlington, but particularly today, to speak to the member opposite's legislation, Bill 190, the Safe Texting Zones Act. I want to thank the member from Nipissing for bringing forward this legislation.

As an advocate for safety on Ontario's roads and as someone whose late spouse was an OPP officer who dedicated his life and his career to road safety and who attended many fatalities in the course of his career—I was listening to the member from Whitby-Oshawa. My late husband was an OPP officer in Whitby, at that detachment, and unfortunately he had to attend a number of fatalities on the 401, first on scene. As his spouse, I know how deeply these kinds of collisions—most of them preventable—affect officers and, of course, families.

What I find great about today's conversation—and I want to thank again the member for Nipissing for tabling this legislation and enabling this conversation today—is that it's a very non-partisan approach. I think Ontarians really appreciate when we find common cause, when we work together on safety, and in particular road safety issues like this. It really resonates with all of us, I think. I'm pleased to speak on this initiative and lend my support to it.

1620

As has been mentioned, this bill would create areas along Ontario's roadways where it's safe and reasonable to pull over and have a conversation on your phone or use your hand-held device—cellphones in particular, this has been mentioned—in order to carry out an activity that would otherwise be distracting.



According to the most recent Ontario collision data, in 2013 there were 71 fatal collisions in which at least one driver was coded by the police officer as “inattentive.” These collisions resulted in 81 fatalities. In fact, distracted driving caused more fatalities than impaired driving and speed-related fatalities in that same year, which, again, shows the burgeoning nature of distraction.

To quote OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair, “Everyone, from the victims’ families and friends to the police officers who attend these horrific collision scenes and have to notify next of kin ... know how badly this ... needs to stop.” That’s why I’m proud to say that our government is making progress in this regard. In fact, they initiated a pilot program that will help address the issues we’re discussing here today, so the member’s intervention is a timely one.

In the summer of 2014, the OPP approached MTO regarding the introduction of “text stop” safety signing near select highway service centres as part of their safety campaign to deal with an increasing number of distracted driving incidents. The signs were installed at sites along the 401 and at four ONroute locations: Port Hope, King City, Cambridge north and Woodstock.

As today’s discussion underscores, there’s no easy solution to changing inappropriate driver behaviour. Changing this behaviour requires a broad approach. Creating spaces where drivers have a safe spot in order to undertake the kinds of activity the member opposite has brought forward, giving them that safe space so they can text or use their mobile device, is something I would encourage all members of this House to support. It’s a life-saving measure. I look forward to ongoing discussion and debate. I look forward to participating, hopefully, in committee. I thank again the member opposite for tabling this legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** We’ve had a chance to chat a lot today, haven’t we, Speaker? I think we’re very lucky in this House to have such important ideas brought forward by members for private members’ business every Thursday. I enjoy being here on Thursdays.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** We enjoy you too.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Yes, thank you. I think we’ve seen a full slate of them today, capped off by this forward-thinking idea from my colleague from Nipissing. The member’s proposal for the creation of safe texting zones adjoining our highways, I feel, is a key additional step to build on the provincial response addressing the dangers of distracted driving represented by our hand-held texting devices.

It was just last year that we were working in this House and at committee to put some teeth into that response, to up the penalties and awareness in an effort to prevent the preventable accidents and fatalities that impact the lives of motorists and pedestrians across Ontario. All of us in this House know, and many have first-hand experience with, the wide array of distractions

faced by the modern driver. We’ve heard the stories of the impacts distracted driving can cause.

That’s why it’s our job and our responsibility as legislators to ensure our laws reflect the startling realities we see on our roads, because the reality is that as we all stand here today, driver distraction is a factor in about four million motor vehicle crashes in North America each year. Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash or a near-crash event compared with non-distracted drivers.

In Ontario specifically, the OPP have upped that number, indicating that distracted driving is a causal factor in 30% to 50% of traffic collisions in our province. That’s why we all worked so hard last year to unanimously support the Making Ontario’s Roads Safer act in its imposition of tougher penalties, higher fines of up to \$1,000 and demerit points on your licence. Those are the types of penalties we hoped would give a driver pause for thought before reaching to pick up their smart phone.

While heavier penalties are a vital part of the plan to eliminate the impacts of texting and driving on our roadways, the other disturbing reality is, as the CAA has noted, “Despite all efforts, distracted driving has become more prevalent on Ontario’s roads, putting motorists, passengers, cyclists and pedestrians at risk.” So we must do more.

One way to do that is building on the penalties we have put in place with policies that recognize the fact that, in 2016, drivers in Ontario, and indeed across North America, may at times require the ability to safely text while travelling; not while driving, Speaker, but while travelling. Today’s proposal from my colleague from Nipissing for designation and signage announcing safe roadside texting zones—parking lots, carpool areas, rest areas—recognizes that reality and gives the potential texter options to travel and text safely, as long as they’re not doing them at the same time.

Look, I truly believe that most of us in Ontario want to do the right thing. We understand the impacts of distracted driving and want to avoid the phone when at the wheel. But I also know that while we want to do the right thing, some still find themselves with phone in hand at a stoplight or even further down the road. It continues to be one of the worst safety hazards on our roadways. While texting is here to stay, it’s important that we address that reality with options to allow those who feel the urgent need to check their phone or send a message to pull over and do so safely.

The fact is that it wouldn’t take much to get this done. In fact, it already is being done. This past Labour Day saw the OPP and the Ministry of Transportation team up to offer designated text stops at four ONroute highway service centres. ONroutes in King City, Cambridge north—near my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga—Woodstock and Port Hope feature signage encouraging motorists to pull in, stop and text. We’re not reinventing the wheel here. We’re building on the success of this handful of pilots and picking up on the program unveiled by the New York governor in 2013 establishing texting

zones in 91 locations across the thoroughway and on state highways in the state, utilizing existing park-and-ride facilities, rest stops and parking areas.

I would hope that members on all sides of this House can get together today to build on those initiatives, build on the penalties we introduced last year and work toward a full-spectrum approach to the realities and impacts of texting by taking this small step toward safe texting zones.

I want to thank my colleague from Nipissing, and I appreciate the time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** I return to the member for Nipissing to wrap up.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I do want to thank the long list from all parties who supported this, from Niagara, Cambridge, York-Simcoe, Hamilton Mountain, Durham, Whitby-Oshawa, Burlington and Kitchener-Conestoga.

To reiterate, and in closing, Bill 190 aims to combat distracted driving through the creation of designated highway texting zones, where a driver is able to stop safely to use a cellphone. It would also require that signs be displayed along our highways to remind drivers that there is a nearby opportunity for them to legally use their handheld device.

Driving in the province of Ontario is a privilege; it's not a right. Passage of this legislation would continue our bipartisan action to address the growing problem of distracted driving. The Safe Texting Zones Act sends a clear message to distracted drivers that there is no longer any excuse to endanger themselves and those they share the road with. Their text can wait until the next texting zone.

I'm very pleased that so many stakeholders see the merit of Bill 190 and, as I read earlier, have offered up their support. I urge my fellow colleagues in the Legislature today to join and vote in favour of this bill and allow it to proceed to committee. In doing so, they will be taking a concrete and positive step to combat distracted driving.

Again, I thank all eight members who spoke. I thank very strongly all the stakeholders who took the time to write in. I want to thank my staff for all their work and the legislative staff for putting this bill together.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

#### STANDING UP AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM IN ONTARIO ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE L'ANTISÉMITISME EN ONTARIO

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** We will deal first with ballot number 42, standing in the name of Mr. Hudak.

Mr. Hudak has moved second reading of Bill 202, An Act respecting participation in boycotts and other anti-

Semitic actions. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear a "no."

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

I hear a "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with the vote at the end of the other orders of business.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Ms. Campbell has moved private member's notice of motion number 74. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried. Congratulations.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### SAFE TEXTING ZONES ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DE HALTES TEXTO SÉCURITAIRES

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Mr. Fedeli has moved second reading of Bill 190, An Act governing the designation and use of texting zones. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Pursuant to standing order 98(j) the bill is now referred to—

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** —the Standing Committee on Finance.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the bill go to the Standing Committee on Finance? Agreed. Congratulations.

#### STANDING UP AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM IN ONTARIO ACT, 2016

#### LOI DE 2016 SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE L'ANTISÉMITISME EN ONTARIO

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1631 to 1636.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong):** Members, please take your seats.

Mr. Hudak has moved second reading of Bill 202, An Act respecting participation in boycotts and other anti-Semitic actions.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Coe, Lorne  
Colle, Mike  
Fedeli, Victor  
Hardeman, Ernie

Harris, Michael  
Hudak, Tim  
Martow, Gila  
McDonnell, Jim  
McNaughton, Monte  
Munro, Julia

Pettapiece, Randy  
Smith, Todd  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakubski, John



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
<b>Wong, Soo (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	



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Eleanor McMahon, Lou Rinaldi  
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Amrit Mangat, Cristina Martins  
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri  
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